

Sept. 19. 1672. 29. 51.

A Stop to the course of Separation:

Or, THE
SEPARATION
OF THE
New Separatists
FROM THE
PARISH CHURCHES
CONDEMNED,

By a sober Answer to the chief Pleas for
this disordrely practise.

Wherein is discovered how *contrary* it is,

1. To the *Holy Scriptures.*
2. To the Reason of the thing.
3. To the judgement of the old Non-conformists.
4. To Themselves *heretofore.*

Let us follow after the things which make for peace,
and the things wherewith one may edifie another.
Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing
which he alloweth, Rom. 14. v. 10, 22.

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Bishops-head in *S. Pauls Church-yard.* 1672.



2373.07

T.O THE
R E A D E R.

Christian Reader.

IT is not a vain humor of scrib-
ling, nor an affectation of be-
ing an Author, which creates the
trouble of these Papers, but
that great sense I have of the ma-
nifold evils of Separation, which
are as destructive to the Church of
Christ, as tearing one member
from another is to the natural
body. And since the great Apo-
stle of the Gentiles commands us
to have such a fellow-feeling of
the sufferings of the Christian
A 2 Church,

To the Reader.

Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, whereof we are all members, as the members of the natural body have of each others sufferings, I should fear whether I were a living member of Christs body, had I not some smart resentments of these rents and divisions which are daily made in it.

And since there are those who are very busie in justifying and widening these divisions, surely it can be no fault to oppose my self to that growing evil; an attempt, which if it want success, yet may merit a favourable censure. It is well known how our ancient Nonconformists, though they scrupled the use of some Ceremonies then, and still enjoyed and practised in our Church,

yet

To the Reader.

yet did both by their writings and practise, condemn Separation from our Parish Churches : This hath been justly urged against the Separation of some among us, who still pretend to be the Successors of those Peaceable and Conformable dissenters, and take it very ill to be ranked among Brownists and Independents, because forsooth they disown their principles, though they espouse their practises.

And therefore to vindicate themselves in this point, and that they might not be thought Apostates from those principles they have so vehemently contended and fought for, and that they may avoid the force of those killing Arguments

To the Reader.

ments the ancient Puritans urged against the Brownists of those days, they have endeavoured to find out a vast difference between the state of the Church now, and what it was in those days.

The design therefore of these Papers is to consider all those pretended differences between the present state of our Church, and what it was in the days of the old Nonconformists; and if it appear there is no material difference (of which I leave the Reader to be judge) it must then necessarily follow by their own Concessions, that they are as down-right Schismatics, as the ancient Brownists and our present Independents are.

This I have endeavoured to examine

To the Reader.

mine with Christian candor and impartiality, and without any other sharpness of stile, than what the sharpness of an Argument gives it. I beseech thee Reader to consider it with all due candor and impartiality, and joyn thy prayers to mine, that God would at length restore peace and unity to his Church.

Farewel.

ERRATA.

PAge 34. line 24. for *Reformation*, read *Restoration*, p. 41. l. 10. for *that*, read *thus*, p. 57. l. 14. for *Marks*, r. *Mark*, p. 62. l. 5. for *A true Religion*, r. *The true Religion*, p. 80. l. 17 for *as*, r. *at*, p. 101. l. 23. for *by*, r. *to*, and in the next line for *to*, r. *by*, p. 127. l. 10. for *mentable*, r. *lamentable*, p. 155. l. 18. for *Art*, r. *Art*, p. 157. l. 11. for *which*, r. *when*, p. 160. l. 13. for *to* r. *with*.

(1)

A

Sober Answer

TO THE

MAIN ARGUMENTS
Of the New Separatists from
the Parish Churches, to stop the
Course of their destructive
Separation.

Argument I.

*Such Ministers as the Scriptures
command us to Avoid, and
have No company with, nor
so much as Eat with, are not
to be joyn'd with in Church
Communion as our Pastors;
But those that by subscription,
and open declaration to the*
B Church

Church in their Ministry, do absolve all the persons in the Three Kingdoms from the obligation of Reformation, in case of very great Church-corruptions, and justifie them all from the guilt of perjury, are such. Ergo.

Ans. I.

Grotius
Right of
highest
power.

BY those Scripture Precepts to Turn from, Avoid, and Not eat with the wicked; 'Tis manifest, saith *Grotius*, No act is signified greater than a private one; For what is the Church here bid to do, but what a Disciple doth, when he deserteth an Evil Doctor; or honest men do, when they renounce the friendship or society of their Companions fallen into wickedness.

Doctor *Hammond* also interpreteth the Apostles prohibition of the
Corin.

(3)

Corinthians to eat with wicked Church-Members, to be meant of intimate familiarity with them ; so doth the English Annotators.

Annot.
upon 1
Cor. 5. 11.

But they will say, If a man may not hold Civil Communion with such, much less may he hold Church Communion.

This Inference the Separatists made in *Calvin's* dayes. Take it in his own words, " Here (saith he) " they cry out, if it be not lawful " to eat common bread, how " may it be lawful to eat the " bread of the Lord. To which he " answereth. " Whereas they think " it Sacriledge to be partakers of " the Lords bread with them, speaking of wicked men, they are therein much more rigorous than *Paul* ; for where he exhorteth us to a holy and pure partaking, he requireth not that one should examine another, or every one the whole Church, but each man

Ans.

Calvins
Instit. p.
343.

"himself; whereby he sheweth
 "that the company of wicked men
 "at the Lords Table do not hurt the
 "godly; He that eateth unwor-
 "thily, eateth judgment to *himself*,
 "not to *others*.

Cal. Inf.
 lib. 4. p.
 343.

Then again he saith, "It is not
 "in the power of private persons
 "to determine the Communicants
 "at the Lords Table; they have not
 "the judgment of office.

Again, "I do indeed, saith he,
 "not deny, That it is the doing of
 "a godly man, to withdraw himself
 "from all private company of evil
 "men, to have no willing familiari-
 "ty with them. But it is one thing
 "to flee the company of Evil men,
 "and another thing, for hatred of
 "them, to flee the communion of
 "the Church.

To be short, since it is in the
 power of private persons, to choole
 who they will ordinarily, and fre-
 quently converse with at their own
 Table

Table and in common Conversation, but not at the Lords : and 2^{ly} That doing their own duty, they are in no danger of being hurt by the wickedness of Communicants at the Lords Table : and 3^{ly} that experience proveth familiar Conversation with wicked men to be extreme dangerous : it followeth that men may lawfully hold Church-Communion, where they may not hold Civil. Psalm. 106. 35.

2. But if the Scripture precepts, to Withdraw from, Avoid, and not Eat with the Wicked, may possibly be extended to Church-Communion, which I do believe ; Then *suo ordine*, to every one in their own order and place ; for God is the God of order, and not of confusion. As they respect the Governors of the Church, they call upon them for the inflicting of Church Censures : As they respect the People, they put them upon minding their

Officers of their duty, and call for their own concurrence with them therein ; but not to separation, if that be neglected.

The brethren should distinguish between an *Orderly Motion* of the Church Members in their several capacities to the putting bad Ministers and People out of the Church : And a DISORDERLY COMMOTION by the irregular withdrawing and separating of a Party FROM the Church. Perhaps the first may be inferr'd from those prohibitions, to Eat with the wicked ; but the last, which is the practical Inference of the Brethren, is absurd, because it cannot be done without culpable Schism, and threatening the ruin of the whole, by cutting the Church into shreds, and dividing the house of Christ within it self, which whensoever it falleth out, Christ saith, That house cannot stand.

Matth. 12.
25.

3. If it were no sin to hold Communion

munion with Priests, sons of *Belial*, that knew not the Lord; then surely it is no sin to maintain communion with Pastors, though guilty of as bad crimes as those mentioned in the Argument of the Brethren: But it was no sin to hold Communion with *Hophni*, and *Phineas*, the two Sons of *Eli*, being Priests, notwithstanding the enormous wickedness of those men, we find no Precept to the People to disown Church Communion with them, so long as they stood legally possessors of the Priests Office; but on the contrary, the People that took the scandal, and began to abhor the Ordinances for their sake, are called transgressors, 1 *Sam.* 2. 24.

The wicked Scribes and Pharisees, though our Saviour told the People they were covetous Hypocrites, blind Guides, superstitious, making void the Commandments of God by their own Traditions; such

Matth. 23.
23, 24, 25,
33.

Matth²³.
2.

as without repentance could not escape the damnation of hell : Yet for that they sat in *Moses* Chair teaching the Law, Christ not only alloweth, but commandeth the People to hear them. And Mr. *Norton* of *New-England* teacheth, That his Precept to hear them, importeth full Church Communion with them. It is therefore no sin, but a duty (as the case may be) to hold Communion with Ministers guilty of as bad crimes as the Brethren insinuate the Parish Ministers to be guilty of.

Personal crimes in allowed publick Ministers will not justifie disowning them in Church Administrations ; and all that is affirmed in the Brethrens Argument against the Publick Ministers, are but personal crimes : So that though all were true which is alledged against them, it would not thence follow, that it were a sin to joyn in Church communion

munion with them, as Pastors. To this purpose *Calvin*.

“ Nothing is added or diminish-
 “ ed by the worthiness or unworthi-
 “ ness of him by whom the Sacra-
 “ ments are delivered; and even
 “ as among men, if a Letter be
 “ sent, so the hand and seal be
 “ known, it maketh no matter
 “ what manner of man be the Car-
 “ rier. Even so it ought to suffice
 “ us, to know the hand and seal of
 “ the Lord in his Sacraments, by
 “ what Carrier soever they be
 “ brought. Hereby, saith he, the
 “ Error of the Donatists is well
 “ confuted, which measured the
 “ force and value of the Sacrament,
 “ by the worthiness of the Mini-
 “ sters. It nothing hindered the
 “ Jews to be circumcised of un-
 “ clean Priests or Apostates.

*Calv. In-
 str. lib. 4.
 p. 439.*

4. The grievous crimes charged in the Minor, upon One and All the Publick Ministers, are onely confi-
 dently

dently asserted; not proved, nor any thing said in order thereunto; therefore may justly be neglected.

5. If we should never have communions with Pastors, that one party or other have not charged with the like crimes, we should never have held communion with any in *England* for many years. I am grieved to speak it: For as the present Conformists, for abjuring the Covenant, are now called perjured persons by the offended Brethren, because they renounced the Covenant: So were the Non-Conformists themselves called perjured persons by the Conformists heretofore, because they took the Solemn League and Covenant, being in their judgments cross to divers Oaths formerly taken by multitudes of themselves, particularly the Oaths of Allegiance, Supremacy, and Canonical Obedience.

6. Very wise and conscientious
men

men, think the Subscriptions and open Declarations the Objection speaketh of, doth not hinder the use of any *Moral* Endeavours of Reformation *in* the Government, but only *seditious* Endeavours of Extirpation *of* the Government now establisht by law. And if the Solemn League and Covenant, heretofore taken, bound men to use any *such* Endeavours, to destroy the publick Establishment then in being, or now re-established, it ought to be repented of, and not stood to, except Sedition and Rebellion be no sin. The Brethren should distinguish upon the obligation from the Solemn League and Covenant; 1. As it contain'd a new obligation to do some things which we are all bound to, if we had never taken it; namely, in our places and callings, to endeavour Church-Reformation, according to the word of God. Now, in this sense, no body is en-joyned

joyned to declare against it, which the Objectors do not consider. But only in the second place, as it containeth an obligation in our Places & Callings, and with our lives and fortunes to endeavour the extirpation of Church-government by Arch-Bishops, and Bishops, &c. and by this means to overthrow our fixed Ecclesiastical State; to root out the Government established by law, which 1. The King took his Oath to maintain, at his Coronation; 2. The Government confirmed by *Magna Charta*, and by thirty Parliaments; 3. And that enjoyned and taken without the Kings consent: for the Covenant saith not we shall endeavour to root out Prelacy [If the King will give leave]: Nay 4. Contrary to the Kings Proclamation, *October 9. 1643* wherein he admonisheth his Subjects to beware of it, and prohibiteth them to take it upon their Oaths of Allegiance, saying,

saying, that whatever the pretences
 of it were, it was in truth nothing
 but a traiterous seditious Combina-
 tion against him, and the establish'd
 Religion, and Laws of the King-
 dom : 5. A Government which
Grotius telleth us is repugnant to no
 Law Divine, but it is approved by
 Divine Law, That the Universal
 Church hath received it, That this
 Prelacy hath its pattern in the Law
 Natural and Mosaical, and had its
 beginning in the Apostolical times;
 and that the history of all times pro-
 claimeth the many commodities that
 have come to the Church by it:
 And which wise *Fregivil*, a man
 of a deep head, as Bishop *Hall* cal-
 leth him, speaking particularly of
 the English Prelacy, saith, it is
 grounded on Gods word; and that
 in such a mighty Church, as the
 Church of *England* is, the STATE
 of the Church ought to be preserv-
 ed; for Equality, he saith, will be
 hurt-

Grotius
 Right of
 highest
 power.

*Calvin's
Epist. ad
Reg. Pol.
p. 140,
141.*

*Zueh.
Thes. de
vera Re-
fo-manda-
rum Eccle-
siae Re-
formatione.*

hurtful to the State, and in time breed confusion. A Government which *Calvin* commendeth to the King of *Poland*, that for order sake in so great a Kingdom, he adviseth the King to establish Bishops in every Province, and over them an Arch-Bishop and Primate.

Zanchy saith, " He that will receive and follow the use and the opinion of the Universal Church, in all times and places unto this age ; for a certain Interpreter of Gods word will easily understand, that the several degrees of Priests and Bishops, in the Ecclesiastical Government, are, and ever were, according to Gods Word : therefore where they stand still, they must not be abolished ; and where the contrariety of times hath abolished them, & not suffered them, they must be set up again. And that with *Calvin* he saith, " They are worthy of any execration " that

“ that will not submit themselves to
 “ that Hierarchy that submitteth it
 “ self to the Lord Jesus.

Again, this is his Protestation,
 “ That before God, and in his con-
 “ science, he held them all for no
 “ better than Schismaticks, that set
 “ this down, as a part of the Refor-
 “ mation of Churches, to have no
 “ Bishops, that have any Eminence
 “ of degree and Authority, above
 “ their true fellow Priests, where
 “ they may well be had.

Du Moulin also telleth us: “ That
 “ the Superiority of the English
 “ Bishops hath been approved by
 “ the most worthy Pastors of the
 “ French Churches. That it was
 “ necessity, not any Theological de-
 “ cision, made *France* a Church
 “ without Bishops.

Martin Bucer, for the weal of
 the Church of *England*, he being
 to assist in the work of Reformati-
 on, “ We must endeavour, saith
 “ he,

Buckler of
 Faith up-
 on the Ar-
 ticle of
 the French
 Confessi-
 on.

Bucer
Tract. de
Reformati-
onē Eccles.
Tem. 2.

“ he, that all the manner and di-
 “ stribution of Ecclesiastical Go-
 “ vernment, which the Canons
 “ prescribed to Bishops and Metro-
 “ politanes, be restored and main-
 “ tained

Beza's E-
 pistle to
 the Bre-
 thren of
 the Eng-
 lish
 Church.

Likewise Beza declared his dis-
 like of those that resisted Episco-
 pal power, where it was establish-
 ed. He exhorteth some dissenting
 Brethren in *England*, That leaving
 all bitterness they should obey the
 Queen, and all the Prelates with a
 free heart; and called it self-con-
 ceited pride in them that rejected
 their Authority.

S. *Jerome* telleth us, “ That it
 “ was decreed all the world over,
 “ that One chosen from among
 “ the Presbyters should be set o-
 “ ver the Rest, to whom all the
 “ Care of the Church should per-
 “ tain. Further saith, “ The Church
 “ ches safety consisteth in the digni-
 “ ty of the chief Priest, that is, the
 “ Bishop;

“ Bishop, to whom if there be not
 “ given a SUPERIOR POWVER O-
 “ ver all the Rest, there will be
 “ made so many Schisms in the
 “ Church, as there be Priests. It
 seemeth then in his time, that Ex-
 perience had prompted all Christian
 Nations to set up Prelacy in the
 Church : and that not only a Pre-
 lacy of Place, but *Power*, as that
 which was for the good of the
 Church. And *Grotius* telleth us,
 that whosoever shall affirm Episco-
 pal Eminence to be unlawful,
 charge the Church in all Ages, not
 onely with folly, but impiety.

Right of
 highest
 power.

Mr. *Baxter* telleth us also, ‘ That
 ‘ Episcopacy was no such upstart
 ‘ thing, nor defended by such con-
 ‘ temptible reasons, as that the Con-
 ‘ troversie is like to die with this
 ‘ Age ; undoubtedly there will be a
 ‘ learned and godly party for it
 ‘ while the world endureth. And in
 another place, ‘ That some of the

Baxter of
Church
Govern-
ment, p.
 300.

C

‘ Pre-

‘ Prelates were venerable for their
 ‘ Admirable learning and piety, and
 ‘ that Prelacy had not a few mean
 ‘ persons to adorn and credit it.

What a prodigious error then, and evil was it (all these things considered,) to enter into a solemn League and Covenant, without any more ado, (not so much as consulting the Bishops) to extirpate the very Government it self, to introduce we knew not what in the room, as experience quickly proved.

Three things are necessary, saith learned Bishop *Bramhall*, to make a publick Reformation lawful, *Just Grounds, Due Moderation, Sufficient Authority*. There may be Just Grounds without Sufficient Authority, and Sufficient Authority without Just Grounds; and both Sufficient Authority, and Just Grounds, without Due Moderation. But he saith, they are all necessary to con-
 cur

cur to make a publick Reformation *lawful* : But the Reformation designed by the Scotch Covenant, to root out Prelacy, had none of all these three Ingredients of a lawful Reformation in it ; neither Just Grounds, Due Moderation, nor Lawful Authority ; and therefore the Covenant to effect such a Reformation must needs be unlawful.

To sum up all then, 1. Here was no *Just Grounds* to take such a Covenant, because for National Churches, where are Kings at head of them, it is not only a lawful, but the *best* Government, in the judgment of the wisest and greatest Students of Divinity in the whole world.

2. As there was no good grounds to take it, so there was no *Due Moderation* in the taking of it ; for that the Bishops, whose interest both for themselves and the Church was deeply concern'd, were never

call'd to a free debate upon it ; so that it was *unjust, uncharitable, and disingenuous.*

Kings De-
claration
October 9.
1643.

3. There was no *Sufficient Authority* to impose it , because the King, whom the Brethren by their Oath of Supremacy had acknowledged was within his Dominions supreme in all Ecclesiasticall Causes, he did by Proclamation *declare* against it, and prohibit his Subjects the taking of it.

This being the truth of the case, the Solemn League and Covenant to root out Prelacy, was sinful both for matter and form ; and therefore not to be stood too, but repented of. And the Conformists by abjuring the Covenant, as it bound men to such disorderly re-formations, are so far from absolving the people from lawful endeavours of Church-Reformation, or justifying them from perjury, that they only teach them to pay a just debt

debt of repentance, for a notorious breach of the fifth Commandment, and unjust violation of former lawful Oaths, evils which they happened to fall into in a hurry of times, by the erroneous Doctrines and bad Example of their Leaders, which may teach the people for the future to study to be quiet, and do their own business, and take heed *who*, *how*, and *what* they hear.

7. And lastly, let the excellent worth both for piety, parts, learning, and zeal for holiness of many Conformists be considered, the dirt of this Argument cannot stick on them: But when persons through mistake or discontent separate from a Church and Ministry, they must either make the *Church* and *Ministry* *vile*, or their separation will make them *vile*. Men love not to be thought to do evil.

Argument II.

If we hold Communion with the Publick Ministers, we shall hold Communion with them in their publick Ministerial sins : It is therefore a duty to separate.

Ans. I. **T**HE Brethren first conclude the publick Ministers One and All guilty of horrible crimes without proof; and then that themselves shall partake with them in their guilt, if they own them for Pastors. By such imaginations as these, the Devil for many years last past, hath cheated the poor people of *England*, and rob'd them of the chiefest gifts of the Church. Upon this ground *Robinson, Cann*, and the rest of the rigid *Brownists*, pluckt away

away the Children of the Church from the breasts of their own Mother, and put them to Nurse in the separate Congregations, and ruin'd them. *Read Mr. Baxters Epistle to the separate Congregations.*

2. The publick professed Ministerial sins of the Publick Ministry that the Objector speaketh of, if there be any, are only sins of ignorance, otherwise it is not like so many worthy men should venture on them : Or indeed were the publick professions, which the Objector calleth sins, *so* indeed, it is much that such and so many hundred profound judgments should not be convinced of their sinfulness. But

3. Let that fall out how it will, the ground of the Brethrens separation on that account is not good : for that holding communion with Ministers barely as *Ministers* of the Gospel, (and the Common-people can be charged with no other) will

not make people participate with them of their Ministerial sins. 'Tis one thing to partake of a Ministers gifts, and Christs Sacraments by his hand; another thing to communicate of his sins. Again, 'Tis one thing to participate with a Minister in the Ministry of that which is good, another thing to participate with him in the guilt of that which is evil. Now I say Gods people may partake of the Ministers Gifts, and Christs Sacraments by his hand, without participation of the guilt of his personal or Ministerial evils; Or else the holy Prophets and people of old would never have held Church-communion with the wicked Priests in their time; neither would Christ have commanded his Disciples to communicate in the gifts of the Scribes and Pharisees sitting in *Moses* Chair, of whom he told his Disciples at the same time, that they were wicked men, that said, and did not.

4. If

4. If the brethren themselves could not partake of their own Ministers ministerial gifts, without participating of their ministerial sins, they had better never communicate with them at all. Oh ! how great and how many were the ministerial sins of the Pastors of divided parties, in our late confusions upon unhinging the Government ; one party prayeth against another as Schismatics ; the other preacheth and prayeth against them as Tyrants ; a third party preacheth and prayeth against them both, as Antichristian Ministers ; a fourth party preacheth, and prayeth, and writeth against them all, as under the fourth Beast, ignorant of the work of the day, railing on Superiours. Should the poor people, by joyning in Church-communion with Pastors, become guilty of their ministerial sins thereby, they are sometimes so great and so many, that it would go near to justify

stify the neglect of all Ordinances, and all Ministers.

5. And lastly: The Brethren that object, for the most part, do not scruple to hold communion with publick Ministers in prayer and preaching, which sure they would not do, if they thought they should partake with them of their ministerial sins thereby. And what good reason can be given, why Communion in the Sacraments should make persons partake of the ministerial sins of the Administrator, any more than communion with them in prayer and preaching ?

Argument of
the
Pa

Argument III.

*If the Parish Churches be fill'd
with Usurpers, and the true
Ministers thrust into Corners,
then 'tis no sin to separate.*

I. **L**ET the Brethren learn of Mr. *Ans.*
Baxter. 'The Church is *Baxter's*
'bound, saith he, to take many a *Church-*
'man as a true Minister to *Them,* *Govern-*
'and receive the Ordinances from *ment.*
'him in faith, and expectation of a *p. 131.*
'blessing upon promise, who yet
'before God is a sinful Invader,
'an *Usurper* of the Ministry, and
'shall be condemned for it.

2. But the present Parish Ministers are no *Usurpers.*

To usurp is to take possession
of a place, once belonging to another,
without or *against* law. The
Parish Ministers now do not take
their

their places without or against law, and therefore are no Usurpers, but true and lawful possessors of the leg places.

3. What was that created the Brethrens right, *in their opinion* to publick places in the Long Parliament dayes, and *oued* others, but subjection to the Laws (such as they were) then in being for the purpose? Now if obedience to the questionable Laws then in being served them *then* to distinguish them from Usurpers, surely by a far higher reason, obedience to the undoubted Laws now will justify the right of present publick Ministers, and distinguish them from Usurpers.

4. When the Parliament put down the Episcopal Party, and set up the Presbyterian and Independent, the Brethren did not like to be called Usurpers, but the Episcopal Party did alwayes reckon them

awaken them so, because they took them
 but to come into other mens places not
 he legally excluded, but meerly by
 the power of force, without the
 the power of right.

5. When King *Solomon* thought
 good to put down *Abiathar*, and
 set up *Zadoc* in his room, *Zadoc*
 was no Usurper.

Argument IV.

It is sin for Christians to be
 without Discipline, and a more
 profitable Ministry, when they
 may have it. The Parish Chur-
 ches are without discipline, and
 have a less profitable Mini-
 stry. It is therefore no sin to
 to separate.

E. 1. **I**T is indeed a sin for Christians *Ans.*
 to content themselves with-
 out

out Discipline, and the most profitable Ministry, when they may have it in a *lawful way*; that is, by Prayers to God, humble Addresses to Authority, faithful Performance of Duty, both to Ministers and Church-members; though it should always be remembered, that the *Rod* is not of the essence of the Family: It concerneth the well-being but not the being of it. But to separate from the Church, and gather Churches out of the Parish Churches, and so to set up Altars against Altar to come at it, this seemeth a most unlawful course of seeking it: this is to deserve personal discipline ones self, for taking a bad course to come at Church discipline upon *others*. 1. Because 'tis to do evil that good may come thereof. 2. 'Tis a practise which no Scripture Precept or Example countenanceth. The Scripture Churches; both Old and New, were more

grit

grievously corrupted for want of discipline ; but the Prophets, Christ, Luk. 2. 21.
 Apostles did all hold full communi- Lukc 17.
 on with them notwithstanding, and 14.
 commanded others to do the like. Matth. 23.

3. Because to separate from the Church, *is in the nature* of the thing to destroy the Church, and that *directly*. ' Building the Church, saith ' Mr. *Baxter*, is but an orderly joyn- Baxt. Ep.
 ing of materials, what then is *dis-* to Saints
 joyning but pulling down ? This is Rest.
 to cure the Church by cutting her
 throat, saith he.

4. The Judgments of the most learned Divines are utterly against separation for the want of discipline. St. *Austin* inveighing against the Donatists separation upon the Calvins
 same pretence, saith thus. ' The Institut.
 devices of separation are vain and p. 413.
hurtful, and full of sacrilege, be-
 cause they are *ungodly*, and *proud*,
 and do much more trouble the
 weak good ones, than they amend
 ' the

the stout evil ones.

Calvin's
Instit. l. 4.
cap. 12.
413.

Calvin calleth the separation of the Donatists, because the Bishops did neglect discipline, *An ungodly Schism*; And to doe like the Anabaptists of his time. Let the Brethren consider this. 'He is free 'and discharged from curse, saith *St. Austin*; and *Calvin* from him. 'Who ever he be, that either by 'rebuking amendeth what he can, 'or what he cannot amend, exclu- 'deth, *saving the band of peace*. 'What he cannot amend, saving the 'band of peace, he doth disallow 'with equity, and bear with sted- 'fastness.

St. Cyprian to the same purpose. 'Let a man therefore mercifully 'correct what he can, and what he 'cannot, let him patiently suffer, 'and with love grieve and lament 'it.

To this purpose *Mr. Baxter*. 'Proud men, saith he, will not grow

in the same Field or Church where such Tares do grow, but will transplant themselves, and remove from the field, because God will not pluck up the Tares; especially if any *ministerial neglect of discipline be conjoyned*; as too commonly it is; and instead of blaming their own pride, they lay the blame on the corruptions of the Church.

Bapt. Ep.
to the se-
parate
Congre-
gations.

2. I prove the Parish Churches are not without discipline, whether we respect the *Power* or actual Exercise of discipline. That they have some power of discipline, I prove,

1. From the Title of Rector, which the Law giveth to all Parsons of Parishes; 2. From the Rubrick, where the Minister is not only authorized, but commanded to keep all scandalous persons from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; And 3. from the Canon, where it is written, *No Minister shall*, in any wise,

mit to the holy Communion any of
 his Care or Flock, which be openly
 known to live in any notorious sin
 without repentance; nor any which
 have maliciously and openly contend
 ed with their Neighbour, until they
 shall be reconciled. 4. Every Pa
 rish Church hath Warden under
 Oath, to present all scandalous sin
 ners, in order to punishment for
 their offences. 5. And lastly, Di
 vers persons, both Ministers and o
 thers, that have been proved scand
 lous, have suffered censure, both
 and about London, and else-where.
 To say nothing of the Excommuni
 cation of Quakers, and others
 whom the Brethren did always
 judge worthy of censure.

Some are of opinion, that there
 have been more proper acts of dis
 cipline performed in the Parish
 Churches, upon just offenders, since
 the Reformation of the Bishops, in
 few years, than was in all the time

of their absence; though not so much as should be and might be, if Officers and People did their duty. And the Brethren that complain should consider how far themselves are accessory to the want of discipline, by their withdrawing their brotherly assistance; for that discipline must begin at the People, said Mr. *Calamy* heretofore to the Independants that made this objection.

‘ Besides, I cannot approve of the practise of those, saith Mr. *Baxter*, that because most of the world are naught, do therefore conclude men dogs and swine, before that ever they did faithfully and lovingly admonish them, or perhaps before ever they have known them, or spoken with them; and hereupon will not communicate with them in the Lords Supper, but separate into distinct Congregations; I perswade to no such ungodly separation.

Baxters
Ep st. to
Saints
R st.

eparation. The Brethren that separate, neglect their duty in order to discipline, and then separate from the Church for want of discipline,

3. If the want of discipline will justify separation from the Parish Churches now, then it would justify the separation of the Independants, and Brownists in the Long Parliaments days : For Mr. Baxter saith, The Presbyterians then have shewn their Government in Papers not in Actions. That they generally had settled in a constant neglect of discipline many years together. That their practice, to let none partake of the Sacrament that refused to be examined, at the same time leaving them stated Members uncensured, was rather to gather Churches out of Churches, than to execute any proper act of discipline or to this effect, &c, with much more to the same purpose.

Let the Brethren take notice by

Reform'd
Pastor,
p. 216.
Preface to
Reform'd
Pastor.

the way, what a deep sense of evil Mr. *Baxter* had of gathering Churches out of the Parish Churches : And let not the Brethren think it a small matter to justify all the separations from the Parish Churches in their days, against which they so mightily exclaimed heretofore. Is it a light matter to harden all the Sects in *England* that have separated from the Church.

Again, With what sincerity can the Brethren pretend the want of discipline, to justify separation from the Parish Churches, that for many years together settled in a constant neglect of it ?

4. And lastly, Whereas it is said, The separating Ministers are the more profitable, and the more lively Ministers,

I answer, I will not deny but that some, yea many of the Ministers, that are now laid aside, while they had their ministerial standing in the

Parish Churches, and Catholick Communion, were profitable; but the best of them not more profitable than many that now take their places in the publick Establishment, if so profitable. Comparisons we say are odious.

But let them however be never so profitable, if they once become Pastors of stated opposite Assemblies to the Parish Churches, they may continue zealous, but they shall cease to be profitable as to the great ends of a Gospel Ministry.

Epistle to
Separate
Congre-
gations.

Mr. Baxter telleth the Separatists from the Parish Churches, That the Pharisees Liturgy is of too frequent use in the separate Assemblies: *I thank thee, O God, I am not as other men are, nor as this Publican.*

It cannot be denied, and can never enough be remembred and discoursed, for the admonition of all Ministers and others, that the same persons,

sons, and that in great numbers, that while they kept the publick Communion, notwithstanding all the pretended defects of the Parish Churches, they have been known to grow in all the fruits of the spirit, mentioned *Gal. 5. Faith, Love, Joy, Peace, Humility, Meekness, Obedience.* But after their departure from the Catholick Communion, that they might live in the Communion of a purer Church, they have been known to grow as fast in the fruits of the flesh; namely, Variance, Hatred, Emulation, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies; and many have fallen to horrible uncleanness. The Independants heretofore tell us, they were caution'd against Brownism, by the observation of the Rocks and Shelves they observed they split upon.

Apolog-
tical Nar-
ration.

We have the same reason to beware of all Separations from the Parish Churches of *England* whatsoever.

Mr. *Baxter* having taken special notice of the strange and wonderful Judgments of God that hath followed persons that have separated from the Parish Churches, for a purer Communion, writ an excellent Epistle to the separate Congregations, wherein he lift up his voice like a Trumpet to awaken them, and convince them of their evil way: which let all the new Separatists read, and tremble.

Baxter's Epistle to
separate
Congrega-
tion.

‘ The Hand of God is apparently
‘ gone out against your wayes of
‘ separation; you see you do but
‘ prepare persons for a further pro-
‘ gress, Seekers, Ranters, Quakers;
‘ and too many professed Infidels do
‘ spring up from amongst you, as if
‘ this were your journies end, and
‘ the perfection of your revolt.

Again, ‘ By such fearful deserti-
‘ ons did God formerly witness his
‘ detestation of those that withdrew
‘ from the UNITY of the CHURCH.

Calvin

Calvin speaking of men that break in sunder the bond of Church Unity, which he reckoneth all to do that separate from a Church that hath the Word and Sacraments; No man, saith he, escapeth the due punishment of his divorce: He bewitcheth himself with most pestilent errors, and wicked dotages.

Calvin
Instit. l. 4.
p. 339.

And that we have found it in England, as well as *Calvin* and others observed it in other Countries. So that for the best Ministers and People to agree to break the Unity of the Church, for a purer and livelier Communion, is the way to become the worst Ministers and People; yea, No Ministers, No Christians.

‘ Oh ! how dangerous and how
‘ deadly a temptation is it, saith *Cal-*
‘ *vin*, when it doth but enter into
‘ our heart to depart from that
‘ Congregation wherein are seen
‘ the signes and tokens by which the
Lord

Calvin
Instit. lib.
4.

‘ Lord thought fit to describe his
 ‘ Church, *Let us beware, saith he,*
 ‘ *of so wicked a disagreement.*

Argument V.

If there be in one City or Country some lawful Pastors, that meet in Houses with their Flocks, and some that meet in Temples, he is the Schismatick that meeteth not with the first in Houses, being of his Charge; and he is the Schismatick that meeteth not with the other in Temples, being of his Charge; therefore to say, all must come to the Temples, or all must not, are both Schismatical Assertions.

1. This

I. **T**His Argument standeth *Answ.*
upon a sandy rotten foundation, namely, that all Persons, Ministers and People, notwithstanding the Laws to the contrary, may knot in Church-communion as they please. Whereas it dependeth upon the Nurse-father of the Church to govern the Pastors, to bound and fix the particular Church-communion of all Christians in his Dominions, being a part of his work in the business of the Lord. A King of 1 Tim. 2.2 the true Religion, is not only a King of his Subjects as *Men*, but as Christians; though *Bellarmino* say the contrary, to advance the Pope above Kings. That it is a part of his Trust to do his utmost, that all things concerning the Worship of God and Religion may be decent- 1 Cor. 14. 40. ly, and orderly performed by his Christian Subjects; and that the whole Affair of Religion may be managed

Dent. 17.
19.
Pla. 2. 11.

managed to the highest advantage for the glory of God, the honour of Religion, and the edification of Souls. Kings are commanded to keep all the Law of God, to serve God, to kiss the Son. This being spoken to Kings, not as *Men*, for so it would concern them then no more than other men; but as Kings: It followeth some royal act is required of them, proper to them as *Kings*. Therein do Kings, as they are commanded by God, serve God, as Kings, if in their Dominions they command things good, and forbid evil; not only in respect of humane society, but the worship of God also, saith St. *Austin*. And this is that Royal nursing the Church, which by the Prophet God hath promised, saith *Grotius* in his Right of the Highest Power.

In order hereto, the King putteth the whole Nation into parts, as the General of an Army putteth his Souldiers;

Souldiers ; buildeth , or causeth to be built publick Temples for each part to meet at for the Worship of God : Appointeth approved Pastors for the performance of the Offices of Religion to each part ; Encourageth the Universities, and all publick Schools of Learning ; Fixeth maintenance for the Ministry , maketh Laws to bind all the Christians inhabiting in each part ordinarily to tend upon the Word and Sacraments, administred by the Pastors there fixed, to avoid confusion, and to punish all such, as disturbers of the peace and common Order, that shall not obey.

By which means, if Pastors, and other Church-Officers and People did their duty , not one Christian in the Kingdom but would come under inspection , except in such Parishes which are grown too numerous, and indeed calleth for re-ctifying.

Whereas,

Whereas, if such particular care were not taken, it cannot rationally be imagined, how one Third of the Nation should come under any Church care at all, or so much as hear the Cospel truly taught.

If the whole were not put into parts under particular Officers, the multitude would be in confusion: If they had not publick Temples to meet at, the parts would be at a loss for publick Meeting-places: If no Universities to breed and fit men for the Ministry, Popery would over-run us for want of learned men to defend the Truth; If Pastors were not approved by men Orthodox, Hell would furnish the Church with Hereticks and false Prophets, instead of true Pastors: If Maintenance for Ministers were not fixed, Ministers would be discouraged; for many would rather have no Ministers, than be at the charge of maintaining them. If no Laws to bind

bind Christians to frequent the Public Ordinances, and keep their Stations, multitudes would indulge themselves in idleness and schism, which the Laws are a curb to.

Now where is the man living that can tell a better way to provide for the honour of Religion, and the salvation of a great Nation of Christian souls, where there are so many millions to be lookt after? Neither in all this doth the King any thing but in a just pursuit of his Regal Trust; for that he put forth no *Act in* Holy Things, but only *about* Holy Things: No inward Act purely Ecclesiastical, but outward purely Political, though about Ecclesiastical objects, such as *Asah*, *Jebo-sophat*, *Hezekiah*, and others of the Kings of Israel did. Which Presbyterians do all allow to the Highest Power.

Besides all this, the Baptismal Covenant bindeth all that enter in-

Rom. 13. ^{1.} to it, to obey Authority, making Laws for the general good; for that it bindeth men to all Gospel duties, as Circumcision bound the Israelites to the Law of *Moses*.

How then can the Brethren imagine a relation between Pastor and People, contrary to the Law; as if particulars of a Community, mutually engaged to walk regularly, might break and transgress all publick Orders, and be blameless.

The Law appointeth such an approved Pastor to perform the Offices of Religion to such a Company of Christians, in such a Parish. The Law appointeth all those persons to own and attend such an one for their Pastor, till lawful Governors find cause to remove him. That Cohabitation hath an aptitude in it for constant and ordinary Church-communion, agreeth to common sense, and is according to Scripture example. Particular Churches took their

their Name and Relation from Co-habitation in Scripture times : The Christians dwelling at *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, and *Coloss*, take the name of the Church of *Corinth*, the Church of *Ephesus*, and the Church of *Coloss*. And in great Cities of Christians, where the multitude is so great as in *London*, that there is a necessity of putting the whole into parts, 'tis highly reasonable for the common good, that the Neighbourhood of each part should concur together in Church-communion, because being near one another, they are in the better capacity to perform the duty of brethren to one another; so that the Law, Right Reason, and the Word of God, hath joyned the Parish Ministers and People together.

Whoever then shall go about to snatch away the People from the publick Minister authorised by Law in this Nation (where we have a

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fixed

Same
Ref.

fixed Ecclesiastical Estate) and gather the People to himself, to wait on his Ministry as a Pastor, I fear he will prove the Schismatick, for that he breaketh the Union of the Church causelessly, and worketh confusion in the Church of God. ' I ever approved a peaceable Conformist before a turbulent Non-conformist, saith Mr. *Baxter*.

Again, ' Above all be followers of peace and unity : He that is not a Son of peace is not a Son of God. ' I differ from my brethren in many things of considerable moment ; yet if I should zealously press my judgment on others, so as to disturb the peace of the Church, and separate from my brethren, I should fear I should prove a fire-brand in Hell, for being a fire-brand in the Church. I charge you, ' if God should give me up to any factious Church-rending course, that you forsake me, and follow me not a step. Argu-

Argument V I.

Nature teacheth to hold Personal Communion with those Churches which have all Gods Ordinances, and the purest Communion, and the most lively Ministry, not meddling with other men.

1. **N**ature also teacheth not to *Ans.*
 hurt a Community for a private Convenience; to prefer a part before the whole, is not natural: Forasmuch as the parts cannot be conserved but in the whole, 'tis but reasonable that *parts* quit their particular Inclinations to be ruled by the *Inclination* of the *whole*. The light of Nature teacheth, That the general good of Consociations is to be preferr'd before the particular good

of particular Persons, or particular Conſociations.

2. Nature teacheth all loving, dutiful, and grateful Children, not to forſake and leave their Mother when ſhe is ſick or poor, if they may keep with her without ſin; but on the contrary to labour to enrich and heal her. ' The way to cure the ' Churches, ſaith Mr. *Calamy*, is not ' to ſeparate from them, but to continue with them, and by living with ' them, to labour to enrich and heal ' them. ' By other ſins men pull ' down the Church conſequentially, ' but by ſeparation they do it directly, ſaith Mr. *Baxter*: And that by ' gathering Churches into diſtinct ' Bodies in *oppoſition*, they cut the ' throat of the Church; And ſurely that is againſt nature. If any one ſhould object; yes, but the new Separatiſts do not gather Churches out of the Pariſh Churches, in *oppoſition* to them. To this I answer

Mr. *Calamy's* Sermon at *Aldermanbury*, 1659.

Epist. to Saints Rest.

in the words of Mr. *Baxter* : ' Build-
 ' ing is putting materials together ;
 ' what then is disjoyning but pul-
 ' ling down ? That practice then that
 pulleth down the Parish Churches,
 is done in opposition to them, what
 ever the parties intend : But to ga-
 ther Churches out of the Parish
 Churches is to pull them down ,
 and therefore a practice in perfect
 opposition to them.

3. Separation to the apparent
 hurt of the publick speaketh the sad
 loss of Catholick Principles and Af-
 fections. First men lose Catholick
 Principles, then Catholick Affecti-
 ons, and then fall to uncatholick Pra-
 ctises, *sinking into self*. But 'tis be-
 low the spirit and practise of a ge-
 nerous Christian to look at his *own* Phil. 2. 4.
 things *only*. The Apostle sought not
 his own profit, but the profit of ma- 1 Cor. 10.
 ny that they might be saved : He 33.
 pleased not himself, but all men for
 their edification: And 'tis his express

1 Cor. 10. precept to the whole Church ; Let
24. no man seek his own things, but e-
very man anothers weal.

Object. But the case of the Parish Churches is not all alike.

Answ. 'Tis true, they are not all alike, in all respects; in some the Ministerial gifts are more excellent, in others less; but they are all alike as to the lawfulness of Communion with them, and the unlawfulness of separation from them. For that every Parish Church, where an approved Minister is fixed, is a true visible Church, to which Christ hath promised his presence : There is all that is essential to a true visible Church, that is plain, because there is both *matter* and *form* of such a Church. 1. There is the Matter : for there is a company of visible Saints, that is, a company of Professors of saving faith in Christ, by the Baptismal Covenant separated for God, and dedicated to him ;

him; and so take the name of Saints as the primitive Churches did.

2. There is the Form too; and that is congregating themselves together in a stated course to worship God in Christ, To call upon his Name, To hear his Word, To partake of his Sacraments. Neither is any sinful thing imposed as a condition of Lay-communion, in the judgment of the Brethren themselves. Now nothing more is required to denominate a true Church, with which communion may be held without sin.

‘Every Congregation, saith *Calvin*, that pretendeth the name of the Church must be thus tried as with a Touchstone, if it have in it the Word and Sacraments, the Order appointed by the Lord, it will not deceive us; let us boldly yield it the honour due unto the Church.

In another place, ‘There is not a doubtful, nor a deceitful face of

*Calv. 3. 2.
lib. 4.
p. 315.*

' a Church, where the Word and
 ' Sacraments go, reverently heard,
 ' and purely administred, Christ go-
 ' eth along with them; for his pro-
 ' mise cannot deceive, *Matth.* 18. 20.
 ' And these can be no where in a
 ' fixed stayed state, but they must
 ' bring forth fruit. Thus far He.

Calv In-
stit. lib. 4.
c. 341.

' The Parish Churches being one
 ' and all of this character, they are
 ' such Churches from which a godly
 ' man may not separate, where the
 ' Word and Sacraments are, saith
 ' *Calvin*. Again, ' Such a Church is
 ' never to be cast off though it swarm
 ' full of many other faults; yea
 ' some faultiness creep into the Ad-
 ' ministration of Doctrine and Sac-
 ' raments.

It must needs then be a grievous sin
 to separate from the poorest Parish
 Church in *England*; nay the more
 grievous, and the greater is the sin
 of a godly able Member to separate
 from such a Church, than from
 one

one more perfect, because there is the most need of the brotherly assistance of abler brethren. If that part of the Church where the lot of more able persons are cast, happen to be uncomely by the weak gifts of the Minister, the ignorance and defects of the Members, let such Brethren hearken to the Apostle upon the uncomely parts. We bestow more abundant honour, alluding to the natural Body and Marks, that there may be no *Schism* in the Body. And here let me add,

1 Cor. 12.

25. 26.

Should an honest and zealous knowing Christian, whose lot by Gods providence becometh cast into the Communion of a poor weak Church; I say should he in the fear of God, and love of the Church, and poor Brethren, in stead of separating from the Church, hold the closer communion with the Church, and considering the true state of the Pastors and Brethren,

apply

apply himself to them for the general good, endeavouring to prefer the common interest, by all manner of holy prudent and fitting applications, he shall undoubtedly find comfort in it at death more than they that separate: For they to their power have pulled down the Church for their private convenience; the other denied his own convenience to support the Church.

Argu-

Argument VII.

As we condemn not all the Parish Churches beside when we are but in one of them, so we condemn none of them absolutely, when we are in none of them, else the Parish Churches sinfully condemn the French and Dutch.

1. **T**He bare simple meeting of *Answ.* Parish Churches in several places, doth not amount to condemning one another, no more than several Companies of an united Army quartering in several places doth, because though they meet in several places, they all meet as parts of one another in the same communion, parted only for the better accommodation of the whole. But Separ-

paratists, that gather Churches out of the Parish Churches into distinct Congregations, under a *distinct* undiscovered Government ; such meet not *as parts* in the Communion of the whole, but *as parties* cut off from the Communion of the whole, and in *opposition* to the whole: For which there being no sufficient cause, they do most sinfully condemn their Brethren, and stand just in the condition of a Troop or Company in an Army, that in discontent have withdrawn themselves from the main Body, resolving to stand upon their own defence, refusing to give and take influences from the whole. Now look what the state of such a Troop or Company would be in the judgment of the Army, the same must such Assemblies be in the judgment of the Church.

Argument VIII.

The Temples and publick Maintenance are in the Magistrates band, and he may give them to whom he will : And if he dispossess the lawful Pastors of them, they are bound to obey him : but they may not take themselves discharged of their Pastoral Office in relation to their Flocks. Magistrates ordain not Ministers, nor degrade them.

1. **T**He Argument supposeth *Ans.*
 the Parish Pastors & Churches to have no *Authoritative Government* over them at all, or else that they *ought* to have none ; but that every particular Pastor and
 Con-

Congregation throughout all *England* should stand independent, both which suppositions are very false.

That in a Christian Nation, where the King is of a true Religion, and where there is near ten thousand particular Pastors and Congregations; to say that these by divine right should *all* stand independent without some superiour power to govern the whole, is against the light of nature, and common sense; for where ever Multitude is, there is confusion, unless that Multitude by virtue of *Order* be brought to an Unity. It cannot be otherwise, but that plurality not united together by the bond of Union, must come to division, and from division to contention, and from contention to confusion, as we found by experience upon unhinging the Government by Bishops, and the loss of our fixed Ecclesiastical State.

2. Since the Restoration of the King,

King, and the Bishops, the Parish Pastors and Churches become fixed by *Law* again, and are under Government. And if the Brethren have taken the Oath of Supremacy, they have owned the King to be supreme Governor of all Persons and Causes in his Dominions both Ecclesiastical and Civil. Now except the Brethren think the bounding particular Congregations, and ordering the Pastors, to be no Ecclesiastical Causes: They are both under the government and ordering of the King, and determined by the Laws; and particular Pastors and Congregations cannot claim Independency without sin.

The King hath made the Bishops Governors under himself of all the particular Pastors and Parish Churches in *England*, as any one may see that readeth the Book of Canons, wherein the King ratifieth and enjoineth this Canon with the rest;

Book of
Canons.
Seventh
Canon.

That

That Excommunication *ipso facto* pronounced against the man that depraveth the Government by Archbishops and Bishops, &c.

Now how should the Brethren continue lawful Pastors to particular Flocks in the Church of *England*, contrary to the publick Laws of Superiours? The Law saith all Incumbents that perform not such conditions shall cease to be Parish Pastors: Thereupon others become placed in their room. The Brethren say, though they do not perform those conditions, and others be put in their places, yet their Pastoral relation to their Flocks standeth still. Now I ask how this can be, except the Brethren reckon themselves lawless persons.

Object. Why but though they are no lawful Pastors before the Church of *England*, and in the eye of the Law, yet they are before God.

Ans. 1. If they are no lawful Pastors

Pastors before the Church, and in the eye of the Law, they cannot be lawful Pastors of their particular Flocks before God, because for the safety and commonweal of the Church, God hath committed the power of governing both Pastors and Flocks to the Nurse-father of the Church (whom the Brethren use to stile a Bishop of things *WITHOUT*;) *¶us divi.*

To that purpose the power of *Presb.* placing, displacing, deposing suspending, and removing Pastors, as he shall find cause, *without* or *Against* the Peoples or Pastors minds: Otherwise, an end shall be propounded him; that is, to preserve the Churches Purity, Peace, and Unity, but the necessary means shall be denied him: One whereof, is to have the power of placing, displacing, transplanting, or temporary suspending Ministers; for that

F some.

sometimes they prove scandalous, sometimes heretical, sometimes seditious, sometimes improved for publick use.

In all which cases, it is plainly necessary for the common good, that Pastors be removed, but 'tis not always found that Pastors and People are willing to it, but the contrary. That popular election is not absolutely necessary to the relation of Pastor and Flock (though in some cases convenient) is the declared judgments of the *London* Ministers, as well as others ; for which they give strong Reasons. *Fus Divin. Ministerii, Anglic. p. 132.*

*Fus divin.
Minist. p.
132.*

Object. But if it be said *further*, Magistrates do not Ordain Ministers, nor degrade them.

Ans. 1. 'Tis one thing for a Magistrate to degrade a Minister, another thing to prohibit him the exercise of his *Ministry* in
his

his Dominions. This saith Mr. *Baxter* unquestionably he may do.

2. *Solomon* did not ordain *Abiathar*, but he deposed him and set up *Zadoc* in his room. And Mr. *Baxter* saith, ' It was just *Solomon*, ' *David*, and other Kings of *Israel* ' and *Judah* did take down and ' set up Priests, and order the Officers of the house of God. The care of the Church is so committed to Kings, in the Scripture, that they are commended, when the Church goeth the right way; and taxed, when it runneth amiss: And therefore her Government belongeth in chief unto Kings; for otherwise, one man would be commended for anothers care, and taxed for anothers negligence. The old Nonconformists therefore being silenced, did acquiesce therein, and being objected against by the Brownists for so doing, they

Baxter,
Holy
Common-
wealth,
p. 302.

Book of
Canons,
1642.

justify themselves by this Argument, ' If a guiltless person put
 ' out of his charge by the Churches
 ' Authority, may yet continue in
 ' it, what proceedings can there
 ' be against guilty persons, who
 ' in their own conceit are always
 ' guiltless, or will at least pretend
 ' so to be, seeing they also will
 ' be always ready to object against
 ' the Churches judgement, that
 ' they are called of God, and
 ' therefore will not give over
 ' their Ministry at the will of
 ' man, *Mr. Rathband, page 41.*

Upon the whole then, it appeareth a vain Plea of the Brethren, that after their particular Flocks are by publick Governors and the Laws disposed to other Shepherds legally qualified, they should yet stile themselves, The Legal Pastors, and call the present Incumbents Usurpers. As if a Captain when his Commission
 is

is taken from him, by the General, and his Company transferred to the Conduct of another, should yet affirm he was Captain, and the Company his Company: Should any discontented Officer in an Army plead thus, and make a party upon it, and disturb the peace of the Army, it would be very scandalous. There is the same reason it should be so in the Church.

Object. But what, are Magistrates to be obeyed absolutely, in point of *Pastors*, *Church* and *Worship*? If so, then in *Spain*, *France*, *Italy*, and all over the world.

Ans. No doubt the power of the Magistrate in point of *Pastors*, *Church* and *Worship*, is limited by God: And therefore if King *Solomon* when he put down *Abiathar*, had set up a Priest of *Baal* in his room, and com-

manded the people to own him for the Priest of the true God, he ought not to have been obeyed : But since he set up *Zadoc* in his room, a true Priest of the same Religion, he ought to be obeyed, because he did but change the *Officer*, not the *Religion*.

Object. Magistrates may drive us on to our duties in Religion, but not from our duties : Therefore if he command true ordained Ministers not to preach, or people not to hear them, or not to perform their duty to them ; *whether it be better to obey God or men, judge ye.*

Ans. 1. Truth of Ordination Alone, will not continue a title to a publick strtion in the Ministry in all cases. *Abiathar* was truly ordained a Priest, but yet the Brethren grant it was lawful for *Solomon* to depose him. If true ordained Ministers shall after

after their Ordination, by Scandal, Heresie or Schism, threaten the Church, they are to be avoided by Divine Law: As by private persons, in a private capacity, so by publick persons, in a publick capacity, for the common safety of the Church. *Grotius* telleth us, 'The right of removing a certain person or persons from the Ministry of a certain place, ought always to remain in the highest power: Nor only may he do this by way of punishment, but by way of caution too; and unless the highest power could do this, the Commonwealth were not sufficient to secure it self.

For a Non-conforming Minister then, though truly ordained, to undertake to preach in this Nation contrary to Law, and draw people to hear him contrary to Law, some think so far from being any point of obedience to

Rom. 16.

17.

Grotius
right of
the high-
est pow.

p. 13.

p. 240.

God, that it maketh both Minister and people guilty of greater evils than I am willing to mention.

'Tis true, if a Jewish or Heathen Magistrate, being of a false Religion, command an Apostle of the true Religion, not to preach any more in Christs name: then to disobey man would be to obey God; which was the case of the Apostle *Peter*, who though he could work miracles to justify his divine Commission, yet the Council of the Jews forbade him to speak any more in Christs name:

Act. 4. 19.

To whom he saith, *whether it be better to obey God or men judge ye.*

But this is far from our Brethrens case; and therefore this Text is impertinently urged.

Because our Non-conformists can plead no extraordinary Call to the Ministry, as *Peter* could: They can work no Miracles to justify their Commission as *Peter* could

could. On the other hand, our Law-makers, the King and Parliament, are no Jews, as that Council was to whom the Apostle *Peter* spake those words. But on the contrary,

With us the Supreme Magistrate is a *Christian*: And instead of *forbidding* persons to preach in *Christs name*, as the Jewish Magistrates did, he filleth the publick Temples with Pastors or Preachers in *Christs name*: And quite contrary to the Jews, *commandeth* them to preach in his name, and the people to hear them upon certain penalties if they neglect; and for reasons of Church and State, forbiddeth private Conventions for worship: As the Church of *Scotland* was ever wont to do. This is our case. Now for Ministers and people, as this case is, to walk cross to publick Authority, and disobey man, I fear

Rom. 13. 1

is to disobey God, who hath said,
*Let every soul be subject to the higher
 power.*

Argument IX.

*If Magistrates would appoint us
 unskilful Physicians for our
 bodies, when we can chuse bet-
 ter for our selves, we love our
 lives too well, to think we
 should obey them : But the
 Magistrate hath less power
 to deprive us of the choice of
 our own best Soul Physicians,
 than of our Body Physicians;
 for that the danger of death is
 less terrible, than the danger
 of damnation.*

1. **T**He *London* Ministers, as *Ans.*
 well as others, have given *Fus. divi.*
 divers good Reasons, why in *Minist.*
 some cases, people are not to be *p. 132.*
 trusted with the choice of their
 Ministers.

2. Some think, by reflecting
 upon the furious proceedings of
 unpeaceable spirited men this
 last thirty years, that it is far
 better for Religion, and the safe-
 ty of the people, to enjoy a
 peaceable spirited Minister,
 though of weaker gifts; than a
 turbulent, though of never so ex-
 cellent gifts, for that peace to
 the Church is as life to the
 man.

The most Learned Lord *Eaton*, *Lord B2-*
 speaking of peace in the Church, *con, Ef-*
 and the benefits of it to those *says, p.*
 within the Church, saith, 'It *13.*
 ' containeth infinite blessings, it
 ' establisheth faith, it kindleth
 ' charity.

'charity. The outward peace
 'of the Church, distilleth into
 'peace of conscience, and it turn-
 'eth the labours of writing and
 'reading of Controversies, into
 'Treatises of Mortification and
 'Devotion. But speaking of dis-
 'union, he saith, 'Tis worse for
 'the Church, than corruption of
 'Manners.

3. If the highest power for rea-
 sons of state, should appoint cho-
 sen and Approved Physicians to
 any place, who can refuse them?
Grotius telleth us, 'Though na-
 'turally men chuse Teachers for
 'their children, and give them
 'Guardians, sick persons make
 'use of what Physician they
 'please; yet in many places,
 'Guardianship is appointed by
 'Law, or the will of the Magi-
 'strate; Physicians and School-
 'Masters are constituted by pub-
 'lick Order, with Interdiction of
 others

others from the practice of those
 faculties. And he saith, ' this
 right is competent to the high-
 est power. And as for the ap-
 pointing of Pastors, he saith
 thus, ' That sometimes there
 may be just causes why the
 highest Power should challenge
 to its self the election of Pa-
 stors. *No wise man will deny.* Many
 Reasons he urgeth, p. 215. For Right of
highest
power.
 often errors introduced into
 the Church of God, against the
 Word of God, cannot be rooted
 out by other means. Often there
 is no other way to avoid Schism:
 with more to same purpose, and
 concludeth, ' The manner of
 election of Pastors to be of the
 number of those things that are
 not specially determined by
 Law Divine: And that accord-
 ingly in ancient time, the
 Church sometime proceeded one
 way, and sometime another
 way,

Right,
p. 195.

‘ way, according to the different
‘ state and condition of the
‘ Church. This he sheweth at
‘ large; and that this also was
‘ the judgement of *Beza*, p. 195.

4. If the Doctrine preached in
the poorest Parish Church in
England, be humbly heard and
embraced, though preached by a
weak Minister, there can be no
danger of damnation, because
’tis the doctrine of the Gospel of
Christ, which is the power of
God to Salvation. And the ve-
ry same for substance which the
Brethren preach in private (if
they preach truth :) And if any
preach contrary thereto, such are
no Ministers allowed by Autho-
rity.

5. The few godly names in the
Church of *Sardis*, did not only
keep themselves in the love of
God, but in a state of much pu-
rity, Even under a *dead* Ministry.

Rev 3. 1.

For

For that *Angel*, though he had a name to live, was dead. Salvation then is not in danger under a weak, so it be a true Ministry, unless it be the peoples own fault : And so it will be under the most lively Ministry in the world, but higher edification only ; which inconvenience by diligent prayer, reading the holy Scriptures, especially Christs Sermon on the Mount, with other good Books, godly Conference and good works, may be redeemed.

6. The natural Itch in common people to quarrel with Superiors, Pastors and others, and withdrawing their due obedience, hath been of very sad consequence in *England*. 'I think, 'saith Mr. *Baxter*, till we have 'better taught even our godly 'people, what credit and obedience is due to their Teachers
and

Mr. *Baxter*.
against
Crandon,
p. 83.

‘ and Spiritual Guides , the
 ‘ Churches of *England* shall ne-
 ‘ ver have peace, or any good or
 ‘ establish’d order : We are bro-
 ‘ ken for want of the knowledge
 ‘ of this truth, till this be known,
 ‘ we shall never be well bound up
 ‘ and healed.

In another place , ‘ Art thou
 ready to censure the Doctrine of
 thy Teachers, the actions of thy
 Rulers , and the persons of thy
 Brethren , beyond doubt thou
 art a proud person , pride hath
 seized on thy heart, there is too
 much Hell in thee to have any
 acquaintance as Heaven. It is
 possible his invention and me-
 mory , may furnish his tongue
 with humble and heavenly ex-
 pressions, but in his spirit, there
 is no more Heaven than there is
 Humility.

S. Rest,
 p. 70.

Argu.

Agument X.

The new Separatists do not separate from the Parish Churches upon the same terms that some others do ; viz. as being no true Churches of Christ, having no true Ministry, nor true Worship, with which communion may lawfully be held : But the Presbyterians separate to enjoy a better Ministry, Discipline, and a purer Communion, and will sometimes hold Communion with the Parish Churches, where they can have no better ; so that their Separation is but like removing from one Parish

G

with Church to another: 'Tis
not setting up Altar against
Altar.

Answer. 1. **T**He culpable Schism of the
Brethren lieth in matter
of fact, That they causlessly and
cruelly divide the Church, let
the terms upon which they do it
be what they will.

2. To remove from one Pa-
rish Church to another Parish
Church, was never called Sepa-
ration, nor ever counted blame
worthy, because all the Parish
Churches in *England* are in one
and the same common Commu-
nion, under one and the same
Government and Discipline,
meeting in parts for necessity
sake, and by publick order: So
that by such removing from one
Parish Church to another, there
is no publick Order broke. There

is no affront offered to Authority : But to gather Churches out of the Parish Churches establish'd by Law, into distinct Congregations, under a distinct Government, contrary to the publick Laws, this is downright Separation : This is plainly to set up Altar against Altar, in the Language of Mr. Baxter in his Book of Rest : *Such Disunion and Separation as this*, he saith, *is utterly intolerable, because it cutteth the Church into shreds : It directly demolisheth and pulleth down the Church. Building*, saith he, *is but an orderly joyning the materials. What then is disjoyning, but pulling down? and to do thus, is to cure the Church by cutting her throat, as hath been noted before.*

Baxters
Ep. to
the Rest.

2. These new Separatists, by their separation upon these terms, make their Schism (in some respects) more criminal, and less

excusable, both before God and man, than the worst Sect that ever separated from the Parish Churches: Because the Brownists and Anabaptists have always pleaded for the justification of their Separation from the Parish Churches, that our Churches, Ministry and Worship were false, yea Antichristian; and therefore they could not hold Communion with the Parish Churches without sin. Now though they are abused by their wild and mad conceits, yet their erroneous consciences makes their Schism less criminal before God, than the new Presbyterian Schism; because though they believe the Parish Churches true Churches, the Ministry a true Ministry, the Worship true Worship, and therefore such as they may not only lawfully hold Communion with, but that sometimes they ought

do it: Yet presume to gather Churches out of them into distinct Congregations; and that after themselves have told us in their Divine Right of Presbytery (with truth enough) That to gather Churches out of Churches, meaning the Parish Churches of England, is a practise without all Scripture president, contrary to Apostolical Precept: *The scattering of the Churches, the Mother of Confusion, The Daughter of Schism, and the Stepmother of Edification.*

Preface
to the
Divine
Right of
Church-
Govern-
ment.

We believe the truth of this Proposition now, and that it shineth with its own light, and that it is utterly impossible ever to shew one Scripture Precept or President, where the best members have separated from a true Church (though corrupt in many things) into a distinct Congregation, to become a new Church of themselves, merely for a more live-

*ly Ministry, Discipline, and purer
 Communion.* Sure I am, the pious
 and zealous people of the cor-
 rupt Churches of the New Testa-
 ment did not do thus. In the
 Church of *Sardis* there was but
 a few living names; the Mi-
 nister and the generality of the
 people was dead. But what, do
 we find these few living names
 separating from the dead Angel,
 and dead part of the Church,
 for a more pure more lively
 communion? No such matter:
 Neither did the Lord Jesus in his
 Letter from Heaven to these few
 living names, give them any such
 Precept: He praises the few li-
 ving names, that they kept them-
 selves pure in the communion of
 a bad, undisciplin'd Church; but
 did not command them to sepa-
 rate from the rest, into a distinct
 body, for a purer communion
 amongst themselves: Yet he nei-
 ther

ther wanted love to them, nor wisdom to direct them.

3. Consider that the most rigid Brownists and Separatists themselves, have declaimed against Separation from such a Church, upon such grounds as you insist on. *Robinson* saith thus, ' That from a true Church, so remaining, separation from such a Church is intolerable for any corruptions whatsoever : A wicked Schism it is, saith he.

*Robinson's
Reasons
discuss'd,
p. 122*

4. Whereas you gather the best people out of the Parish Churches, into distinct Congregations, for a better, and purer communion sake, consider, this practise is the effect of sinful self-love, that would provide well for itself, though never so much to the detriment of of the publick. *Mr. Edwards* said from *Mr Cartwright*, the white Devil was in this pretence. 'Tis

true, that where there is in any Nation an Army of a hundred thousand men ; for *ten* or *twenty* Captains to gather all the *valiant, faithful, diligent, skilful* Souldiers of the Army into *ten* or *twenty* Troops or Companies : This would make ten or twenty excellent Troops or Companies, and no doubt would be very pleasant to the Captains and Souldiers so related. But what mischief, by this means, would be done to the whole Army ? Were it not every way better for the whole Army, that the best Souldiers should be scattered throughout the Army, some in every Troop and Company, for the giving good example, and spiring and provoking the rest to their duty. Consider this well, and apply this similitude to your Separation from the Parish Churches, the reason being evidently

dently the same, and you cannot but accept conviction', that your Separation, if you should persist in it, would endanger the loss of many thousand souls, wrong the great interest of Christian Religion in the Nation, and extremely hazard the Protestant cause. Remember the Church is compared to an Army with Banners.

4. Consider how unlike this selfish practise is, to the *Noble, Generous*, Catholick spirit of Christ and his Apostles: Scripture telleth us, that Christ, though he was rich, he made himself poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. You on the contrary, to accommodate your selves, care not *who* nor *how many* you make poor, I mean in spiritual comfort.

Again, compare your practise with these Scriptures of the
Apostle

Apostle Paul, and you will be ashamed of it: Look not every man on his own things, but every man on anothers also. Let no man seek his own things, but every man anothers weal. I seek not my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved: Upon the uncomely parts we bestow the more abundant honour, that there may be no schism in the body, but that the whole body may have the same care one for another. Brethren, to reconcile your practise with these Scriptures, you will find a hard task, except you were mistaken when you said, To gather Churches out of our Parish Churches, was the Mother of confusion: If Separation be the Mother of confusion, God is not the Author of it: For God is the God of order, not of confusion. And if it be the Mother of confusion, how can you proceed in such a path?

Object.

Object. If you shall say, as some do, We hold with the separate people of the Presbyterian persuasion, to prevent their running into other Sects, at last to Quakerism.

Answer. 1. In the mean time you commit a gross sin, the sin of Schism, by breaking the union of the Church without sufficient cause; and that to come at an uncertain good, contrary to the rule, *Rom.* 3. 8.

2. Separation is the way to make Quakers, as our experience hath proved, rather than to prevent Quakerism.

3. You grieve and wrong the legal Minister, by scattering his flock, undermining his reputation with the people, weakning his maintenance, as well as the maintenance of all Parish officers: This was your complaint heretofore against the Independents.

4. You

4. You wrong the people you comply with more, by joyning with them in their sin of separation, than you can do them good. 1. By tacitly consenting to their needless scruples, which you know to be so, and thereby become necessary to the weakness of their consciences, and superstition that followeth upon it. 2. You train up the people to a dislike of publick Authority by your example, and so feed the humour of breaking the Fifth Commandment, and teach the young man to lift up himself above the Ancient, and the vile above the Honorable; as they have most shamefully done for thirty years last past. 3. You train them up in spiritual pride, justifying themselves that they are righteous, and condemning others.

5. By

5. By this practise you harden all the Sects in their way, and make all hopes of any settled Government, even in your own way, desperate.

6. This separation tendeth to Atheism, instead of Reformation: people seeing so many new unheard of ways in Religion, and all the several parties crying out to the people, Lo here is Christ; Thousands of the people conclude, there is nothing certain in Religion, and neglect all.

7. To deter you from separating from the Parish Churches, to come at a purer communion, let me put you in mind of a considerable saying of Mr. *Baxters* to the old Separatists, 'It is very remarkable, saith he, that it is a pretence of our impurity, and a greater purity with you, that is pleaded by those that first turn over to you. And that this height

Baxter,
Ep to
Separat.
Congr.

' height of all Impieties, saith
 ' he, should be the usual issue
 ' of a way pretended so exact
 ' and clean; doubtless it is none
 ' of Gods mind by this to discour-
 ' age any from purity and true
 ' Reformation, but to shew his
 ' detestation of that spiritual
 ' pride, which maketh men have
 ' too high thoughts of them-
 ' selves, and too much to con-
 ' temn others, and to desire to be
 ' further separated from them,
 ' than God in the day of grace
 ' doth allow of. Consider this;
 ' 'tis the judgement of some, that
 ' thousands are gone to Hell, and
 ' ten thousands upon their march
 ' thither, that in all probability
 ' had never come there, if they
 ' had not been tempted from the
 ' Parish Churches, for the enjoy-
 ' ment of communion in a purer
 ' Church.

Argument XI.

The Parish Churches now, are not as they were in the times when Presbyterians cryed out of gathering Churches out of them: Therefore their sayings to the Separatists then, ought not to be reflected on, and urged against their practise now; for these reasons, 1. Because the Parish Churches then, imposed nothing upon the Minister or people contrary to the word of God, now they do. 2. Because the Parish Churches then were reformatable, now they have covenanted against Reformation.

on. 2. The Parish Churches then had proper Pastors, that had the power of the keys of Government, not so now. 4. Because in the Parish Churches now, the Presbyterian Ministers are forbidden to preach, and the people to have the Sacrament, or their children to be baptized, unless they will say and do such things as they dare not do, for fear of Gods displeasure. The Parish Churches then drove none such away from Ministry and Communion.

Insinuation

Insinuation I.

'Tis insinuated, the Parish Churches in Presbyterian days, imposed nothing contrary to the Word of God, either upon Minister or people, but now they do.

I. **T**He Parish Churches cannot justly be charged with imposing any thing at all, either upon Minister or people, much less imposing any thing contrary to the Word of God; because they stand in the capacity of Subjects, not Legislators. *Ans.*

2. *WHAT* is it that is imposed? First, upon the *Parish CHURCH MEMBERS*, contrary to the Word of God, there is not any one thing instanced in, and it is judged impossible for any one to prove *one such thing*. Mr. Baxter communiceth with some of the Parish

*Baxter's
D fence of
the prin-
ciples of
love, p 35.*

rish Churches, both in the Word, Prayer and Sacrament of the Lords Supper ; and telleth us, that divers Learned Nonconformist Ministers in 1663. at a Conference concluded it lawful so to do : Which they would never have done, if they had thought any thing imposed on private persons contrary to the Word of God.

3. Now concerning the *PARISH MINISTERS*, what is imposed on them contrary to the Word of God, the Objector doth not instance in any one thing. The Conforming Ministers themselves think no such thing of the Impositions upon them ; if they did, in charity we are bound to believe they would never conform to them, knowing multitudes of them as tender conscienced as any, by their general course of life.

4. Let it be seriously considered, in the fear of God, whether the Parish Ministers and Churches in

1643 taking the Scotch Covenant to root out the Government established by Law, confirmed by many Acts of Parliament, and contrary to the Kings publick Declaration of his dislike of it, and prohibition of his Subjects to take it: Whether did not this act, render the state of the Parish Ministers and Churches, more obnoxious to exception, as to the point of communion with them, than any thing can be urged against the Parish Churches and Ministers now, that live in charity among themselves, and in obedience to their Governors and Laws, especially considering multitudes of the Parish Ministers themselves, that ventured upon this dangerous Oath, were first under the Oath of Allegiance to the King, the Oath of Supremacy, and the Oath of Canonical obedience to the Bishops.

Insinuation II.

The Parish Churches in Presbyterian dayes were reformatable in that wherein they needed Reformation; But now they have covenanted against Reformation.

Ans. 1. **T**Rue, the Parish Churches then wanted Reformation, but never like to be reformed in the Presbyterian way to the end of the world. 1. Because the Independents, men of great fame and interest, all manner of wayes obstructed it. 2. Because Presbyterian Examination by a new sort of Church-Officers, called Lay Elders, before receiving the Lords Supper, was intolerable to the people. 3. Because the Parliament would never be brought to grant the Presbyteries that power which they thought necessary to go through with the work: For which reasons the work never

Parliam.
Declar.
April 17.
1646.

never proceeded to any purpose, nor never like to proceed to the end of the world. So that in a hurry the old Government was pulled down, and none ever after like to be set up in the room of it, but every man left to do what is right in his own eyes. So that as King *James* his Aphorism proved true, *No Bishop no King*; so this also, *No Bishop in England, no national Church Government in England.*

2. Whereas it is insinuated that the Parish Churches have covenanted against Reformation, and not to say when and wherein, is undoubtedly to insinuate hard things against the Parish Churches, and upon very hard terms. They know no such thing.

3. We know no Covenant against Reformation that ever was propounded by the Churches, much less taken to them. The people of the Parish Churches are under no

other Covenant now than they were in Presbyterian dayes, that any body knoweth of.

4. 'Tis true, the *Ministers* in the Long Parliament dayes, having been so unhappy, as by Sermons in the the Pulpits, and Speeches at *Guild-hall*, to have too great a hand in the wars; and having bound themselves by an oath to persevere in their endeavours to root out Prelacy, which the present Parliament hath thought fit to restore; and the King also to take an Oath at his Coronation to maintain, as his Ancestors had done before him: The King and Parliament since their Restoration, have not thought fit to admit any man into the Publick Ministry, without first giving security for his keeping the peace both in the Church and State for the future, that we may have no more such bloody wars, neither Ecclesiastical nor Civil. This is the true meaning

meaning of all the Ministers covenanting that now enter into the Ministry, and the only occasion of all the extraordinary Impositions upon them.

Now in my humble opinion, the late Publick Ministers instead of quarrelling with Superiors for these new Impositions, should rather quarrel with themselves, for giving so great and so just an occasion for them: And if they would agree to publish their Retractions and Repentances, as Mr. *Baxter* hath given them an Example, there would be little need of continuing these fetters any longer.

Baxters
second ad-
monition
to Bag-
shaw. p.
51, 52.

Now as for the present Parish Ministers, in what they do when they enter the Ministry; they are so far from thinking they covenant against Reformation, that they think they covenant only against Schism, Sedition, & Rebellion. But whether they think right, or whether they think wrong,

what is this to the poor Parish Churches? do the Parish Churches deserve to be demolisht, and cut into shreds for this, which bad service separation doth them; as Mr. Baxter and the London Ministers, and the reason of the thing telleth us,

Insinuation III.

The Pastors of the Parish Churches in the Presbyterian dayes had the Power of the Keys of Government: 'Tis not so now: They were true Churches, and did own themselves for such.

Answ.

I. **T**He Parish Churches were then, no doubt, true Churches; and so they are now as well as then. They did own themselves for such *then*, and so they do *now*; and will be owned by all Protestants for such, except Brownists and Anabaptists. Herein there is no difference

rence at all between the Parish Churches *then* and *now*. Mr. Baxter himself owneth the Parish Churches *now* for true Churches, by holding full Communion with them, and exhorting others to do so too; and for their encouragement insinuateth the terms of Communion to Lay persons to be more acceptable *now* than in the dayes of former Bishops; and therefore in his judgment there can be no such difference in the state of the Parish Churches *then* and *now*, as to justify separation from them.

Object. But the Pastors in the Presbyterian dayes had the power of the *Keys of Government*: not so *now*.

Answer 1. This cannot be truly said of the Pastors of the Parish Churches, That they have no power of the Keys. The Law calleth them Rectors; and in Ordination the Keys are committed to them. And by
the

the Rubrick and Canons every Parish Pastor is commanded to use the Keys of Government, by suspending scandalous persons from the Lords Supper; so that they sin if they do not govern: Yea 'tis plain, the Parish Pastor doth exercise a true spiritual Government over the Flock, as the Captain doth in fight when he goeth before his Souldiers and leadeth them on and off. He governeth them by a Pastoral Government while he guideth them in Doctrine, Prayer, and Sacraments. Every Parish Minister participateth of the three Offices of Christ, *Kingly*, *Priestly*, and *Prophetical*; and every Parish Church is a true Political Society: That which cannot be said of any Independent Church in the world. The Parish Churches have *pars regens*, and *pars subdita*, so can no Independent Church say, because of their popular Government, which maketh

Pa- keth them rather take the name of
 se *Lumps* than *Bodies*.

And though every Minister participate of the three Offices of Christ, the exercise may be so distributed among the Pastors in a fixed Ecclesiastical state, that one shall do more of the Teaching part, another more of the Ruling part, upon grounds of prudence, yet the ruling part is not wholly taken out of their hands. This is the case of our Parish Pastors; and the truth is, the Law for carrying the rugged part of discipline out of the hands of the particular Pastor, into a Court established by Law for that purpose, ought not to be reckoned a degrading of the Pastor of one part of his Office, but a regulating them rather for the general good in the execution of their Office: it taketh off a load of envy from the particular Pastor, which otherwise would lye upon him, if he should have

have the sole management of so distasteful a work.

2. If it be well considered, you may perhaps conclude, that the particular Pastors have as much power of the Keys of Government as is for the general good : That particular Pastors should have a power to deprive members of choice spiritual priviledges, without controul if they do amiss, were Tyranny rather than Government. *Calvin* concludeth thus ; ' I never thought it useful, ' saith he, to commit the power for ' *Excommunication* to every Pastor : ' for it is an *odious* thing, and an example not to be approved, and ' which would soon slip into Tyranny.

*Calv. Ep.
ad Gasp. 3
Lizetum.*

3. ' Discipline, saith Mr. *Herle*, so liable to *contempt*, needs the help ' of *Majesty, Authority, Reverence* ' to make it terrible as an Army ' with Banners. Now the poverty of ' *Purse, Parts, and Youth* of the great

est part of Parish Pastors, to say nothing of the unruly passions, and undue prejudices, that private persons are subject too on the one hand, and the *age, stubbornness, wealth, honour, learning and parts* of many of the people, who yet deserve discipline, on the other hand, make discipline with honour and success utterly impracticable by most particular Pastors in *England*. 'Tis therefore remarkable that when the Brethren had got the Keys by violence out of the hands of the Bishops into their own, neither Presbyterians nor Independents knew what to do with them, but to lay them by them; they have either totally neglected to use them, which was generally the case of almost all the Presbyterians in *England*, or else fallen under the temptations of throwing them into the Body of the common people, which all Congregational men do.

Baxter,
Preface to
Reformed
Pastor.

Reformed
Pastor, p.
218, 222.

p. 221.

4 To come close then; If the Pa-
rish Pastors in Presbyterians days had
the Keys of Government, what were
the Churches *then* the better, if they
never used them? they generally
settled in the neglect of them, and
not only so, but argued against the
use of them (at that time) as if all
things considered it were better to
let them alone, wick Mr. *Baxter*
lamentably complaineth of, and
sharply reproveth in these words:
'Will you wait till you are dead,
'and leave it as a part of your Epi-
'taph to posterity, that you so deep-
'ly engaged, and *contended* for that
'which you so abhorred to the
'death, that you would never be
'brought to the practice of it? He
telleth them the people had seen
their Government in Paper, but not
in Actions; that they had heard
them talk much of *Government*, but
had never seen the thing: and ask-
eth his brethren whether they can
think

think that the people will be satisfied with the empty sound of the word *CHURCH GOVERNMENT*? with abundance more to this effect.

If it be thus, the Parish Churches *then* were in no better condition in this respect than ours now; nor so good neither: And if separation by gathering Churches out of them were a sin *then*, 'tis so now. And here by the way, let the Brethren think, 1. What work they have made for Repentance and Re-stitution, that rashly swore to root out their lawful Governors the Bishops, and did it, both in respect of their dignities and properties, to come at *Discipline*; And when they had done, were forced to feed the people with two words, *Government* and *Discipline*; but could not let them see the thing, because in truth, they found it impracticable in *England*, in the Presbyterian way, which the Episcopal party was always
wont

wont to say. 2. The Brethren, in all reason and good conscience, ought to accept of a sober Admonition, to refrain their present practise of gathering Churches out of the Parish Churches, to come at Discipline; because upon tryal it hath once already proved a deceitful pretence.

5. Our new Separatists from the Parish Churches for want of discipline, are far more unlike to use discipline *N O W*, than ever they were, when they so neglected it; because then they were not under hatches as now. Their maintenance then was not precarious as now. And Mr. *Baxter* lately hath told us plainly, That the people of the new Separation, instead of being ruled by their Pastors, they so much rule their Pastors, that many of them have been forced to forsake their own judgments, to comply with the violent. What likelihood then is there of exercising

exercising discipline, upon such a headstrong unruly multitude?

6. And lastly, let the Brethren weigh, what one of the most Learned Presbyterians hath said, and they will never separate upon this account:

If the higher powers will not admit of such a form, this may satisfy the Subjects conscience, that Ecclesiastical Government is necessarily more directed and ordered in the exercise thereof, by the determination of the Civil Magistrate, in places where the true Religion is maintained, than where persecuted: They that have received the power, must answer to God for it: They that are discharged from it, shall never answer for that of which they are bereaved.

Second
discourse
of the Re-
ligion of
England,
p. 41.

Insinuation 4.

The Presbyterian Ministers are forbidden to preach, and the people to have the Sacraments, or their children to be baptized, unless they will say and do such things as they dare not do, for fear of displeasing God : But in the Prebsyterian days, the Parish Churches then drove none such away from Ministry and Communion.

Answ. 1. **T**HE Parish Churches do not own themselves to stand Independent, and to have the power of making Laws for Minister and people within themselves: They therefore bid not forbid any thing relating either to Minister or people, but according to the direction of the Law-givers.

The plain truth is this, the
Presby-

Presbyterian Ministers not accepting the terms of the publick Establishment, become silenced by the *L A W S*, not the *People* of the Parish Churches, who are sorry at their hearts, that the Ministers ever gave the Supreme Authority cause to make such severe Laws, and many of them are sorry that ever there were any such Laws made.

2. Though the Presbyterian Ministers are not there, the same Gospel is preached there by others; no Papists, but Protestants, of the same Christian Faith and Religion, and approved by Authority.

3. As fast as any of the Presbyterians become convinced of the lawfulness of submitting to the publick Laws, and desire imployment in the Church, they are embraced, as many have done, and some of them of the most

Learned, Pious and Judicious
amongst them.

4. If any remain unsatisfied,
and by that means unemployed,
doth it therefore follow, that 'tis
lawful to cut the Church into
shreds by Separation, and demo-
lish it, as Mr. *Baxter* saith Sepa-
ration doth?

5. The old Nonconformists
complain'd bitterly of some of
their company in their days, that
having leap'd out of the Surplice,
they could not keep them from
leaping out of the Church too,
by separation into distinct Con-
gregations.

But the most sober of them
did distinguish between bare non-
conformity to every thing done in
the Parishes, and gathering Chur-
ches out of them into distinct
Congregations, under a distinct
Government. They were as great
enemies to this practise as any,
as

as appeareth by their writings against the old Separatists: They distinguish between Separation *In* the Church, by purging it; and Separation *From* the Church, by departing from it.

6. Whereas 'tis said, *In the Presbyterian days, the Parish Churches drove none such away from Ministry and Communion, that through fear of displeasing God, durst not conform to the way of the Parish Churches.* To this it is answered,

1. The Parish Churches then set up *Lay-Elders*; concluded them Church Officers by divine Law; suffered no man to receive the Lords Supper, that would not be examined by them; which drove people from the Sacrament, that they never received it all their life after. And Mr. *Baxter* saith, Setting up *Lay-Elders* was a piece of Superstition.

2. Suppose the Parish Churches

drove none away, the governing power did then drive many excellent Ministers and Scholars, both out of their Ministry and Livings too, by Sequestrations, and into Goals and Prisons, to the utter ruine of thousands, for not taking the Scotch Covenant, and such like obligations, which they could no more do with a good conscience, than cut their neighbours throat. 3. The Independents on the other hand, durst not conform to the Presbyterian way, for fear of displeasing God, that's plain, in that they reckon their own way to be *Jure Divino*: But for all that, the Presbyterians did not think it fit to gratifie their erroneous consciences so far, as to suffer them to gather Churches out of the Parish Churches, into distinct Congregations, if they could have got power to hinder it.

They

They did what they could to hinder it, they fasted, prayed, and writ against it: 'Independency a great Schism, saith Mr. *Cawdrey*: They Remonstrate and petition the Parliament against it: They preach Sermon after Sermon to the Parliament, crying out of it, and thirsted for power to suppress it.

3. 'Tis well known, the most solid of the Presbyterians are for the National Church way; they are for a governing Church over all the particular Churches and Ministers, and as much for order and uniformity to publick Ecclesiastical Laws, as any, and as severe upon the point of order, and far more, than ever the Bishops were. The Presbyterians by principle, are so far from suffering Dissenters from their Parish Churches, to gather Churches out of them, into distinct Congregations,

*For divin.
Minister.
Anglic.
Divine
Right of
of Pres-
bytery.*

gregations, under a distinct Government, that the Scotch Ministers cannot endure so much as the meeting of divers families together, for family worship among them; and give this reason for it, That it tendeth to the prejudice of the publick Ministry, and Schism in the Church; and therefore give this in charge, *At family worship, a special care is to be had, say they, that each family keep by themselves.* This counsel of theirs our Presbyterian Assembly thought fit to prefix before their larger Catechism; which sheweth they approved it. I have now answered the four Insinuations of difference, between the state of the Parish Churches now, and their state in Presbyterian days: And by what I have said, I conceive it appeareth evidently, that there is no substantial difference between the state
of

Scots
preface
to the
Assembly
Catechism.

of the Parish Churches now, and their state in the long Parliament days, wherefore to justifie their separation from them: so that whatever the Presbyterians said *then*, of the *Schism* and sin of gathering Churches out of the Parish Churches, will fall *heavy* upon themselves, if they shall do, as others did before them; nay far heavier, because the state of the Parish Churches in *England*, since the Re-establishment of Episcopacy, hath been much better than before *in many respects*: Because, 1. Now we have cause to hope, there are not many Parish Churches (though the means be small) but the means of saving faith and knowledge are there; because there is the holy Scriptures read, there is the Prayers of the Church, there is the Articles of Faith, the Lords Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments,

ments, Psalms, Sacraments and Homilies, if not other Sermons. But in the long Parliament days, after the Bishops and Liturgy were gone, now generally in the places of very small means, the Church doors have been shut up, and, as is said, all publick worship of God, for a considerable time together ceased, and the people delivered up as a prey to all sorts of Hereticks and Deceivers.

2. In the best places, the loss of the *Liturgy* was undoubtedly a great loss to the Church, because it condescendeth to the weakness of the weak, which the *ex tempore* prayers of most Ministers doth not; and then too, because of the unruly passions, prejudices, errors and other infirmities of Ministers of divided parties, the disuse of the Lords Prayer, the non-repeating of the *Creed*, *Ten Commandments*, the not calling the people

and to make publick Confession of
 ns. their faith, the slighting of In-
 ys. stant Baptism, the total neglect
 rgy of the Sacrament of the Lords
 the Supper in many places, rendred
 the the state of the Parish Churches
 up. deplorable then. But now by the
 or. advantage of a publick Establish-
 ble. ment, the Parish Churches are
 eo. every day growing into a better
 all. condition. What then will be
 ers. the sin and evil of those men,
 of. that instead of repenting of for-
 a. mer rashnesses, will *set their hand*
 ile *again to the same Church ruining*
 es *work?*

Argu-

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Argument XII.

We must distinguish between tolerable and intolerable Ministers. In some of the Parish Churches the Minister is intolerable, and not fit to be a Minister; and for this cause 'tis lawful to gather Churches.

Answ. 1. **W**Hat think you of *Hophni* and *Phineas*, the two sons of *Eli*, they were for their prophaneness intolerable Ministers: They were sons of *Belial*, that knew not the Lord, and yet no separation from them as Priests, justifiable. The people that began to abhor the Ordinances upon their account, are called transgressors, 1 Sam. 2.24.

as hath been noted once before :
 so that though they were intolerable before God, as to their own persons, and therefore ought to have been excluded : They were tolerable before the Church, as to Church Administration, so long as they enjoyed the Priests Office, and not legally ejected. What think you of the Scribes and Pharisees, that *said* and *did* not, whose conversation Christ himself telleth us was a perfect contradiction to their doctrine : surely such are intolerable Ministers before God ; but as to the peoples communicating with such in Church Administrations, they were tolerable ; for Christ commandeth his own Disciples to communicate with them, *Matth.* 23. 2. the reason is this, because order must be kept, and the blessing of Ordinances dependeth not upon the goodness of the
 Admi-

Church.
Govern-
ment, p.
131.

Administrators, but the blessing of the Institutor. 'In one word 'saith Mr. *Baxter*, the Church is 'bound to take many a man as a 'true Minister to them, and receive the Ordinances from him 'in faith and expectation of a 'blessing, upon promise, who yet before God is a sinful Invalid, an Usurper of the Ministry, 'and shall be condemned for it.

But 2. By the Ecclesiastical Law, no man entreth the Ministry in the Church of *England*, whose abilities are not first tryed by Learned men, able to judge of mens fitness, who subscribe not to the Book of Articles, and of whose holy and sober conversation, satisfaction is not first received. In case any Minister prove otherwise, and become intolerable, the people ought not to *right* themselves by Separation, but in a *legal way*, by the assistance of law.

lawful Authority; because otherwise, if the people once get head, break loose from the reins of Government, and turn Reformers, the remedy, in respect of the publick, will be worse than the disease, to a particular Parish.

'Tis to despise Government, break order, introduce Anarchy, the mentable consequence whereof, *England* hath found by woful experience, and 'tis to be wished it may be a warning to all English Subjects for the future, to take heed of all disorderly motions and proceedings.

3. Intolerable Ministers, whether by heresie or prophaneness, on complaint made, and sufficient proof, cannot continue in their places, and therefore there will be no need of Separation upon this account. The Bishops lately have turned out divers for scandal, and are very severe in
the

the point, and resolve to be more so.

4. The common people, except in some notorious case of debauchery and prophaness, are no competent Judges who are tolerable, and who are intolerable; but less able to judge now than ever, because upon disturbing our fixed state Ecclesiastical, and breaking the hedge of Government, a Serpent hath bit us, I mean, the Devil took his opportunity, and fill'd the Nation with Hereticks and Impostors, so that the peoples heads are fill'd with odd notions, mad opinions, and hair-brain'd fancies, all over *England*. Mr. Edwards telleth us, that in a short time 180 errours appeared amongst us. Mr. Case telleth the Parliament, That the errours in the Bishops days, werebut tolerable trifles, but now, saith he, the Nation is filled with

with doctrines of Devils. To this effect, Mr. Pool, Mr. Cranford, and Mr. Manton tell us, that in the Bishops days, *Errours walked in the dark: But now, say they, cum privilegio, for the more speedy corrupting the people.* Sixty and odd Ministers of the City of London, joyn in an Exhortation to their people, and tell them, that horrid and hideous errors had for some years past abounded amongst us against Scriptures, Deity of Christ, Holy Ghost, Trinity, Immortality of the Soul, Resurrection of the dead, Heaven and Hell, decrying and abusing Ordinances, as so many empty forms; that the truths of Christianity were in danger of being buried under the heap and rubbish of all sorts of errors: This the Church got by turning out the Bishops. Now whilst the Nation is thus infected, 'tis impossi-

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In an Epist. to Mr. Pools Book for the Deity of the Holy Ghost.
1662.

ble the common people should be able to make judgement of the tolerableness or intolerableness of Ministers: Persons will now be judged tolerable or intolerable, not, according to the reason of the thing, but as they either hit or miss particular *by* opinions taken up by divided parties.

5. If it be the duty of every individual member of the Church, to sit in judgement of the tolerableness and intolerableness of the legal Ministers; and if judged intolerable, then to separate into a new Church, what can follow upon this practise, but Separation upon Separation to the end of the world, and that from one end of the Nation to the other? For there is no man, though never so worthy, but by some silly and erroneous persons will be thought intolerable. In my humble opinion, instead of feed-
ing

ing the wanton humour of Separation, by such Insinuations as these, it were better for the poor people to hear the wise counsel of *Solomon*, against self-confidence, *Prov.* 3. 6. and *Paul* the Apostles counsel to the Church members at *Rome*, against self-conceit, *Rom.* 12. 16. and that every man would think soberly of himself: it were better for the common people to hear of modesty, poverty of Spirit, the duty of humility, and how improbable it is for them to make so true and so good a judgement for themselves, as their lawful Governors, in such a settled Church as ours is, than to be supposed able and fit to judge their Ministers and Judges. 'Tis impossible we should ever be happy, till the people have learn'd to think more meanly of themselves, and more honorably of their Govern-

nors, as Mr. *Baxter* hath often told us.

Argument XIII.

Some Parish Churches about London are grown too numerous, that all cannot come to the Parish Churches ; therefore, &c.

I. **W**Here lieth the reason of the practical inference of the Brethren, from these premises : Some Parish Churches about *London*, cannot contain their members ; Therefore Nonconformists may lawfully gather Churches all *England* over. 'Tis well known, they that gather Churches out of the Parish Churches, have no regard
to

to any of these circumstances, but gather them out of the Parish Churches, and practise the Sacraments among them where ever they are: And by some it is observed, that for the most part they gather Churches in great Cities where there is no need.

2. Where the case of any Parish is such, the people should be taught to remonstrate their case to lawful Authority, that Tabernacles may be built, as hath been in divers places in the City, since the fire, till a way can be found for building more Churches or Chappels, and also to appoint them some pious, peaceable, orthodox Ministers to officiate; which would be presently granted. This is God sway, because orderly: The other way is tumultuous, and tendeth to sedition, and to practise without

all reverence of Authority, and as if we did not look upon our selves as members of an establish'd Church, but as a company of scattered Christians in a Pagan Country.

3. Till Tabernacles can be built, there are neighbouring Churches capable of more than their own Parishes, to which they may resort.

4. The Parish Churches now that are so numerous, were so too when Presbyterians cryed out of gathering Churches out of the Parish Churches by the Independents: Besides the Plague in 1665. hath destroyed many thousands since; therefore this is no Argument to justifie Separation now, no more than it was in those days.

Argu-

Argument XIV:

That the Conformists in the publick Temples are not enough to preach to the people, and defend them from Popery: Non-Conformists therefore ought to help, and 'tis their duty, though they gather Churches: And the Parish bounds are not of Divine Institution.

1. **W**Hether the publick Ministers be enough to carry on the publick Services, or not enough, is a matter proper for for the consideration and judgement of the governing Church, into whose hands the Law hath put such trusts; not
- Answ.*

proper for private persons, further than to remonstrate and petition: If private persons shall presume to make themselves Judges in matters of publick cognizance, and practise upon their own judgement, contrary to the publick Laws, in such a settled Church as the Church of *England* is: 'Tis impossible for such persons to pass without censure of turbulent. Mr. *Cawdry* telleth Dr. *Owen* of a case like this, and saith, 'Tis an Anabaptistical *Munster*-principle at the bottom.

Independency a great Schism, p. 190.

2. Whereas 'tis said, the Parish bounds are not of *divine Institution*. I answer, 'Tis true they are not of *divine Institution* (in *totidem verbis*) they are no where particularly instituted in the New Testament: But they are of divine Institution, as the Laws of Nature are divine, and as they

they are contained in the general Rules of the Word, where there are no particular Rules in the case, 1 Cor. 14. *Let all things be done decently, orderly, and for edification:* Which is impossible to do in such a great Nation of Christian Professors as *England* is, if the whole be not put into parts, under particular Pastors; as the General of an Army putteth his Souldiers: and also if the parts offer to break their Ranks, and refuse to keep their proper places and stations appointed by Authority: As they do with a witness, that forsaking their own *Minister* and Neighbourhood, to whose conduct and communion Gods Providence and the Laws of the Land have committed them, take the boldness to settle themselves in a stated way of Church Communion with others, scattered here
and


and there, without any regard to Governors or the Government.

3. Whereas 'tis said, the people want the help of more Ministers than Conformists, to defend them from Popery, and for this Nonconformists may gather Churches:

Ans. 1. This Separation Mr. *Baxter* and the *London* Ministers tell us, scattereth the Members, and cutteth the Church into shreds; what offence or defence can the Church in such a shattered condition make against an Adversary? The strength of a Church in every Nation, as well as an Army, lieth in the union of the whole into one body, with some governing Church power over the whole: By virtue of which union, the whole, in all the parts, become capable of the succouring influences of the whole, and without which union it is im-

impossible: These things are evident by the light of Nature, and the *safety* of the whole is concerned in the orderly motion of the parts, in their several places and stations: For a Nonconformist then to the publick Establishment, to presume to gather Churches out of the Parish Churches, what doth he but introduce Anarchy, and overthrow all Church Government? which to do, is not to save the people from Popery, but to betray them to it.

In this I say nothing, but according to the sense of most judicious Presbyterian. In his second Discourse of the Religion of *England*, p. 44. speaking of the considerate Nonconformist, he saith, 'They would rather help to
'bear up the present Ecclesiastical state, than that *Popery* should
'break in by Anarchy, or the
'the dissolution of all Church
'Go-


 ' Government. Again, ' An am-
 ' ple fixed state Ecclesiastical,
 ' necessary to uphold and increas-
 ' the Religion, as well against in-
 ' fidelity, as against *Popery*. So that
 in the judgement of this Learned
 Author, to disturb our fix'd state
 Ecclesiastical, which is done with
 a witness by disorderly gather-
 ing Churches, and running into
 parties: This is the way to bring
 in *Popery*, and not to keep it
 out.

4. To scatter the Parishes
 Churches by Separation, is so
 far from affording help against
Popery, that 'tis notoriously to
 prosecute the Jesuites designs
 and councils for the reducing us
 to *Popery*, which is to do all they
 can to keep the Church of *Eng-
 land* everlastingly in an unfixed
 state; there being nothing they
 dread so much, as our getting
 into order again: ' Our founda-
 ' tion

tion, saith one of them, must be mutation, this will cause a relaxation, which serveth as so many violent diseases, as the Stone, Gout, to the speedy destruction, &c.

Again, 'If the Puritans get the day, we shall make great advantage of it; for they will be unsettled, and all in pieces, and not know how to settle the Government.

Prins Introduction. p. 89.

Read Mr. *Baxters* Key for Catholics, p. 318.

Again, 'Factions and distractions give us footing for continual attempts. To make all sure, we will secretly have our party among the Puritans also, that we may be sure to maintain our interest, which way ever the world go.

'Cherish their dissentions, saith *Adam Contren* the Jesuite, speaking of Protestants, and when all men see, there is nothing certain among them, the people will

Second Book of Politicks.

The last
Directi-
on.

Key for
Catho-
licks,
318.

‘ will easily yield, meaning to
Popery. To this purpose Mr. *Baxter*
telleth us, ‘ that in a disguise
‘ they thrust themselves into all
‘ Sects and parties, not only Ana-
‘ baptists, and Independents are
‘ animated by them, but they ani-
‘ mate the Vanists, Behmenists,
‘ and other Enthusiasts, the Seek-
‘ ers, the Quakers, the Origenists,
‘ and all the Juglers and hidiers of
‘ the times.

How then can it be advisable
for us, by multiplying separate
Meetings from the Parish Churches,
to make still more Receptacles
for the Jesuites to play their
pranks in.

5. And lastly, There are not
very many Ministers that are fit
to meddle much in the Popish
Controversies, either by disput-
ing or preaching, especially in
the private Meetings, that are so
full of distractions and odd opi-
nions.

nions. There is nothing pleaseth a Learned Jesuite better, than to hear some of the private Meeting Ministers, undertake to dispute or preach against Popery; because the most of them having more Confidence than Learning, and more heat than light, they will either mistake the question, or else through ignorance or prejudice, call that Popery which is not, or else charge them with that they are not guilty of, or at best make a weak defence: So that the Adversary rather gaineth ground, than loseth by such oppositions.

When the Jesuites get into one of the separate Meetings, and hear them cry out of Episcopal Government and Ordination, as Popish and Antichristian, what sport this maketh them, may easily be conceived, for that the Brethren themselves
are

Jus divin.
Minister.
Angl. p.
 31.

are forced to confess that there was no other way of entering the Ministry for many hundred years.

Again, At other times to hear the Common-prayer Book reviled for Popish, and the Ministers maintenance by Tythes Popish, and then the Parish bounds Popish at last, Infant Baptism Popish and Antichristian: I say, it cannot be imagined what pleasure it must be to the Adversary, to find when Popery is opposed, those things are condemned for Popery and Antichristian, which the whole Christian world for many hundreds of years hath owned for unquestionable good things: and by this means, instead of disgracing the Pope, we put honour upon the Pope, as Mr. *Vins* the learned Presbyterian Minister once observed and said, ' At
 ' this

‘this rate , saith he , of counting
 ‘things Popish and Antichristian ,
 ‘we shall make the Pope and Anti-
 ‘christ a brave fellow shortly , by
 ‘making him the Author of so ma-
 ‘ny good things.

Argument XVI.

*We are told of separating from
 the Church of England, but
 we do not know what the
 Church of England is , and
 why it should not be as well
 Schism for the Parish Church
 Members not to frequent the
 Private Churches, as for the
 private Separate Churches not
 to frequent them, we know not.*

1. **O**ur New Non-conformists
 are it seemeth come very
 L near

Barrow,
Greenwood

near shaking hands with the old Brownists : They indeed could not tell what the Church of *England* was, but the Old Non-conformists could tell ; for notwithstanding their Nonconformity, they owned the *Church of England* still to be a True Church, in the same sense with the Conformists ; as appeareth by their Book against *Barrow* and others wherein they say thus :

Mr. Rath-
band every
page.

‘ The Church of *England* is a True
‘ *Church of Christ*, and such a one
‘ as whosoever wittingly and wil-
‘ lingly separateth himself, cutteth
‘ himself from Christ. They reckon
their Ordination by Bishops valid,
the Oath of Canonical Obedience to
them lawful ; their Suspensions and
Deprivations (if according to the
Law of the Land) to be yielded to.

Page. 41.

So long as the Bishops suspend
and deprive according to the Law
of the Land, ‘ We account of the
‘ action herein (say they) as the Act
‘ of

‘ of the Church, which we may and
 ‘ ought to reverence and yield un-
 ‘ to.

The *London* Ministers also when they writ their Book called, *The Divine Right of the Ministry*, they did not think the Church of *England* such a strange thing, neither in name nor thing. They argue thus: If all the Churches in the world are called One Church, let no man be offended if all the Congregations in *England* be called *The Church of England*.

*Jus divi-
 num p. 14.
 Ministerii.*

Q. But now it is made a question what is the *Church of England*?

Ans. 1. Upon this occasion, I would by the way admonish all honest men to take heed of entertaining the *first scruples* of conformity to the Church of *England*, because men know not what will become of their scruples, nor where to make an end of them, to the unspeakable damage of the Church and

themselves, and of the great interest of Christian Religion in the main; insomuch that if the question were put since the Reformation, What fruit of them, it must be answered, *None*, but such whereof we are ashamed, even the lamentable decay of the moral part of Religion, straining at gnats, and swallowing camels. This by the by.

Now for answer to the question.

Q. What is the Church of *England*?

Ans. It is a Company of Christian Professors of faith in Christ, inhabiting the *English* Nation, under one Civil Government, by the Laws united into one Ecclesiastical Society (though parted into many Congregations) under a publick Ministerial Church-governing power over the whole, called the National Synod under the highest power. This is the Church of *England*.

And it is a true Political Society; there

there is the governing part, and the governed part ; and both parts take the name of the Church, as it was in the Jewish Church ; the governing part the *Sanhedrin*, as well as the governed part the *People*, both parts take the name of the Church. And as in the Church of *Scotland*, the General Assembly take the name of the Church of *Scotland* ; So in *England*, the *Synod of England* take the name of Church of *England*.

Numb. 35.

24.

comp. with

Joshua 10.

4, 5, 6.

And Mr. *Rathband* the old Non-conformist telleth *Barrow* the Brownist, who spake slightingly of the Church of *England*, as now the new Separatists do ; I say he telleth them, That all the known Churches in the world acknowledge our Church, speaking of the Church of *England* for their Sister. Further saith, That never any one Reformed Church made question of it, That the womb of the Church

Mr. Rathband, p. 6.

of *England* bare the Questionists themselves, and that her paps gave them suck, is well known; That it is a Church that hath brought forth and brought up as many learned men and good Christians, as any Church in the world. And this hath been acknowledged by the learned men of other Churches.

Being thus we are furnished with a true measure for the judging of criminal Schism in *England*, and are helped to answer a new and an odd question; Why it should not as well be called Schism for the Parish Church Members, not to hold communion with the separate Assemblies, as it is called Schism in the separate Assemblies to withdraw from the Parish Churches.

The Answer is this, because the Parish Church Members, by keeping to the Parish Churches and Ministry, they keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; they maintain

maintain publick charity; they observe publick order according to the establishd Laws; they keep their ranks and hold their places, where the Law and Right Reason hath fix'd them. These are therefore the only regular Assemblies.

As for the separate Meetings of Churches gathered out of the Parish Churches, they are like so many Mutineers in an Army, that break all publick order, let go charity, offer a publick affront to the Laws, disturb our fixed Ecclesiastical State; and therefore are unlawful Assemblies, and not to be frequented, but avoided as the proper makers of division. Neither is it possible for the Brethren that separate upon the terms that they now practise it, to give us any definition of schism, that either themselves heretofore, or the Christian Church did ever account good: but it will stick as close to them as the skin to their flesh.

Obj. But if it be objected, as I have heard it hath ; They that give the cause make the Schism.

Ans. I answer, The Brethren do not distinguish between the occasion of a thing by some *Accident*, and the *Real cause of a thing*. Though it should be granted that Ecclesiastical Impositions, as conditions of sacramental communion, such as the Cross and Kneeling, through the weakness of people may become an *occasion*, it will never be proved that any Impositions are the *real cause*, except they could be proved to be somewhere or other forbidden in Gods Word, and that as *plainly* as obedience to lawful Authority in lawful things is commanded in Gods Word. This Mr. *Baxter* and many others hath taught us : But for this no man of our new Separatists hath ever had the confidence to affirm ; so that culpable schism lieth upon all the separate Congrega-

gregations from the Church of *England* old and new.

Obj. That may be a sin to one man that is not so to another ; To him that *thinketh* it a sin to separate from the Parish Churches it will be sin, but to *me* it is no sin.

Ans. The Text referred to by the Objector concerneth the eating or not eating of *this* or *that* meat, and the observing or not observing *dayes*, actions that in their own nature are neither good nor evil : And in respect of such things, error of conscience in one man will make that unlawful to him that is not so to another.

But in respect of things *morally evil*, no error of conscience can make such things *good* to any man which are in themselves *evil*. Theft will be Theft, and Murther will be Murther, and Adultery, Adultery ; and so Schism will be Schism, in the man that committeth these

these sins : Let any mans private thinking of these things be what it will, no mans error of conscience one way or other can alter the nature either of moral *good* or *evil*.

Argument XVII.

To desert ones Ministry is not lawful; 'tis a piece of sacrilege. We cannot preach except we have bearers, we cannot have hearers, but Members of some Parish Churches : Therefore we must gather Churches.

Answ. 1. *St. Austin* said, A man should not commit the least evil of sin to save all the damned from Hell: And *St. Paul* took it for a notorious slander in any man that reported him for one that said men may do evil

evil that good may come. A good Christian is bound to do good though evil come to him for it, I mean the evil of affliction. But the Christian Religion will suffer no man to commit the evil of sin, that good may come to himself or others by it. Now to gather Churches out of the Parish Churches, with which communion may be held without sin, maketh men guilty of a most horrible Schism, because it is to separate without any sufficient cause : 'Tis to tear and rend a Church to pieces, and cut it into shreds only for personal richer Church-priviledges, or secular ends : 'Tis such a monstrous art of uncharitableness, that the new nature loatheth to think of it.

Now, that Communion may be held without sin in the Parish Churches, the Brethren acknowledg it. Mr. *Baxter* himself practiseth it, and hath writ a Book to perswade the

Rom. 3. 8

Cure of
Church
divisions

the Brethren to it ; and telleth us at a full meeting , The Ministers agreed it lawful and fit.

Now I would know then by what good authority this separating practise upon these terms can be justified from the guilt of the most horrible Schism that ever was heard of in the Christian world.

Obj. But saith the Objector, To desert ones Ministry is not lawful, 'tis a point of Sacrilege.

Ans. 1. This Argument is easily answered, by distinguishing upon the non-exercise of the Ministerial Office.

'Tis one thing voluntarily to desert one Ministry, by running to *another Calling* for ease, profit, honour, or fear of persecution. Another thing to suffer suspension of the present exercise of the Ministerial Office, in a particular place, by the Laws of the Christian Church in the Land where a man liveth against
ones

ones will. These are two things far and widely differing one from another.

To do the *first*, is a *Complication* of many vices, and is in plainness a wicked Sacrilege; and such men are not fit for the Kingdom of God:

But the second is the *Illustration* of four Cardinal virtues, *Humility, Meekness, Self-denial, Obedience*. Some of the Virtues all men put off to too great a degree, which they put on separation from the Parish Churches of *England*.

2. A man that suffereth suspension of the exercise of his Ministerial Office in a particular place by the Laws of the Land, in a state of the true Religion, doth not desert his Ministerial Office, because his Ministerial Office relateth in the first place to the *Catholick Church*, in all the Countries of the world, as the Brethren have always urged against the Independents. So that if a Minister be suspended in one place, he may remove to another.

Suspension is not like Excommunication: If a man be legally excommunicated in one place, his Excommunication (if known) may and ought to be a bar against his communion with the Church all over the world, because Excommuni-
cation

cation respecteth the Catholick Church, so doth not Suspension. The just reasons of Excommunication are the same all over the world, which is obstinate persisting in great transgressions of the general Precepts of the Gospel.

But Suspensions may be *just* in particular Countries; not only for crimes, but for *not complying with publick Ecclesiastical Constitutions* for the Government and Discipline of the Church, and orderly and decent administration of the Ordinances, though through weakness of judgment: The reason is this, because the *good of Order* in an establishd Church is greater to the Publick, than the use of particular mens gifts.

Calvins
Instit. p.
402.

Calvin saith, 'Some orderly form ought chiefly to be observed in Churches which are best maintained by a well fram'd disposition of all things. And further, 'Because of the great variety that is in mens *Manners, Minds, Judgments, Wits,* 'No policy can be stedfast enough, unless 'it be established by certain Laws. He saith also, 'There must be an appointed 'Form, or no orderly usage can be observed. Further he saith, 'Without such 'Laws Churches are dissolved from their
'finews,

'sinews, and utterly deformed and scattered a-
'broad.

3. That suspended Ministers in the *English* Church for Non-conformity should acquiesce therein, was the judgment of the old Non-conformists. It hath been taken notice of already, p. 27. in answer to the Eighth Argument; by which every one may take notice how far the present Non-conformists are departed from the judgments of the old Non-conformists, and gone into the way of Brownists. By the way take notice what a dangerous slippery path the path of separation from the Parish Churches is.

4. And lastly, To conclude, If there were any thing of sacrilege in the case, it cannot lye upon the Ministers that suffer suspension, because to commit sacrilege, is to be active in a thing, 'tis to be a practiser of the evil of *sin*; But to suffer a legal Suspension is to be *passive*, 'tis to be a sufferer of the evil of *affliction*,

If the Church suffer by the non-exercise of the Ministerial Office by suspended Ministers, in reason they must answer for it that make the Laws; but they that by the Laws are bereaved of the opportunity, need never fear being charged with the duty.

I conclude with the Saying of a judicious pious Non-conformist, in a Book called *The Second Discourse of the Religion of England*, p. 48.

'I do

‘ I do here solemnly profess that I am chiefly solli-
 Second Discourse ‘ citous for the tranquillity and rest
 of the Religion ‘ of a troubled Nation; as for my
 of England. p.48. ‘ own concernment, my deprivation
 ‘ is an affliction to me : And I would do any thing
 ‘ that were not sin to me, to recover the liberty of my
 ‘ publick service in the Church : But if it cannot be,
 ‘ I submit to his good pleasure by whose determi-
 ‘ minate counsel all things are brought to pass; and
 ‘ *am contented to remain a silenced sufferer* for consci-
 ‘ ence towards God. Note this, That that which
 the Objector reckoned the sin of wicked sacrilege,
 this learned Man to the old Non-conformists rec-
 koneth to be the duty of Christian patience.

Again in another place, touched once before, ‘ An
 ‘ ample fixed State Ecclesiastical is necessary to up-
 ‘ hold and increase true Religion as well against
 ‘ Infidelity as against Popery : The loose part of
 ‘ the world would turn to a weariness, and con-
 ‘ tempt of divine Institutions : And Christianity
 ‘ it self would be much endangered in a state of
 ‘ *Ataxy and Unfixedness*. By this the Reader may
 see how the present Church-confounding practice
 of the Brethren is condemned by one of themselves.
 In his judgment they are in the way of endanger-
 ing, not onely the Protestant Religion in *England*,
 but Christianity it self.

F I N I S.

THE
Unjust Mans DOOM:
AS EXAMINED
By the several KINDS of
Christian Justice,
AND THEIR
OBLIGATION.
WITH A
Particular Representation
OF THE
INJUSTICE & DANGER
OF
partial Conformity.

By *William Smyth, D. D.*

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